

Mennonite Historical Bulletin

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Mennonite Women in Mission: Mennonite Women's Missionary Society

"While in college, preparing to go to India as a missionary, I came in contact with those dedicated women of the church—Mary Burkhard, Mrs. M.S. Steiner, Ruth Yoder and others. I shall always remember their kindness and encouragement."—Mary Good.

Mary Good was one of the first missionaries to be supported by the newly formed Mennonite Women's Missionary Society. Clara Eby (Mrs. M.S.) Steiner initiated the movement for a women's organization; she and the other two mentioned above were the executive officers during the early years of the Society.

The Society that these women envisioned had a much broader scope than an organization of sewing circles. This vision is apparent in the letters written by Steiner to the various district representatives. Many women in the church became enthusiastic about this opportunity to participate in the work of the church through sewing, monetary support of women missionaries, and mission work among women. In February 1918, G.L. Bender, Mission Board treasurer, wrote to Clara Steiner, "I had a little talk with Bro. Aaron Loucks Saturday and he said Mr. Mumaw [Levi Mumaw, executive secretary of the Mennonite Relief Commission for War Sufferers] is almost swamped with women. Ha. Ha. So you see the women are interested not only in supporting missionaries but also doing their bit in helping relief work in the war-stricken regions. May God bless the women of the church." (Clara Eby Steiner Collection)

However, the formation of this women's organization at the initiative of women did not go without criticism and resistance within the church. Clara Steiner attempted to

move her new Society slowly and cautiously, realizing the resistance to organization—especially an organization of women—in the Mennonite Church. She recognized the need for the approval of those in authority at every step. This was partly because of the "liberal/conservative" conflict in the church at this time and partly because of the

resistance to women doing "executive work." Women were to remain in the scriptural order, in subjection to men.

But some of the leaders showed a very independent spirit in the correspondence among themselves. Ruth Yoder as well as others became very impatient with the foot-dragging of the Mission Board in



L. to R.: Clara Eby (Mrs. M.S.) Steiner (holding a grandchild); Charity Steiner (Mrs. Lester) Hostetler (daughter of Clara Eby Steiner); and Tobias Eby (father of Clara Eby Steiner).

promoting mission work. And the letters of Mrs. J.S. Gerig and Crissie Shank printed below indicate a desire for women to control their own work, "to stand independently for interests peculiarly their own."
—Sharon L. Klingelsmith

**Clara Steiner to an Unknown
Virginia Sister
(First Draft of a Letter
Presumed Sent)**

[ca. June 1917]

Dear Sister,

Your letter in hand. In reply would say that you have asked some big questions where you ask for "all our plans" and what are really the advantages of a General Organization of Sewing Circles? It would take me several days to work this out for you. I am working on a series of articles now, to have published in the *[Gospel] Herald* and *Budget* soon, on the subject "Why a Woman's Home and Foreign Missionary Movement?" which will state why we believe in it and which may clear some things up. In the meantime will answer more briefly. We are still working on plans, etc., and a rough draft of a constitution and will mail a copy to each Branch committee woman or Secretary as soon as we are able to do so. We have replies from nearly all the Branch secretaries and each one who has written has accepted—has said they are willing to do what they can, and ask for more information.

You are the first one who seems not to grasp the idea of the general plan as we gave it. We cannot state "all our plans" for they are now in the making and will be what the majority of the sisters want and not just what we think they should be. . . .

We have consulted [Mennonite] General Conference leaders, bishops and ministers, and members of the Mission Board in every step and have had their sanction before we have taken any action. Yes, you

sent me a copy of the Resolution of your ministers which I have preserved. We certainly want you to consult your ministers in this matter if they care to be bothered....

Two sisters were recommended to us to represent Virginia Conference District which we called a Branch. We took your name because of your former interest and our correspondence. But dear sister we would not insist on your serving as a Branch secretary unless you could see the need and opportunities and could do so willingly and gladly as unto the Lord. But we kindly ask that if you cannot do so to let us know immediately so we can take the matter up in correspondence with the other sister before we publish the names.

What you did not seem to glean as other sisters did is this, that your work would be to represent all Virginia Conference territory and not alone your *one Circle*, that you help organize Circles where they have none if opportunity presents. A number of sisters are already at work on this. In my list of Circles which I obtained about two years ago I have only two Circles marked for Virginia—Pike and Fentress. There may have been others organized since. Could you give me an up-to-date list of all, and when organized? I have made a list of churches in Virginia Conference which have no organization, which I enclose. Have taken none with less than fifty members (I had not been taking under seventy, until recently a sister told me they have only forty church members and have a lively organization and at that time had \$15.00 for foreign mission work which they expect to give for our fund.) No doubt that some of these churches are poor, but we believe it is good for even a poor church to consider others less fortunate, or the heathen, and have them give their mites when they cannot give their dollars. I heard [that] the president of our

Mission Board said in a public meeting that he can always tell when he gets with a church where the sisters are at work. . . .

Should all your larger Virginia churches organize in time, you will readily see that your Circle would not need to do quite so much sewing as at present and could spend some of your money for other purposes; and it would enlarge both the hearts of other churches and your own. If your Circles could become interested in foreign missions, as many are, you could decide to hold quarterly collections for that purpose as others are doing and have already done. But, remember, this is left for each Circle to decide for themselves. Your Virginia Conference is smaller than many others and one would naturally not expect so much from your Branch as from the bigger ones; but there is certainly something worthwhile for a sister, who has the work at heart to do in your Branch, to get others interested in work which we believe is well-pleasing to God.

Our plan is for each Branch (this is optional too) to organize with a president, vice-president, secretary and treasurer. In case you accept you would likely be secretary of your Branch. (Of course, I am speaking about a time when all your churches or more have organized.) You would conduct your own work in your Branch so long as you did it according to General regulations, send your money through your treasurer to our General treasurer once each quarter, stating definitely for what purpose or purposes money is sent. (We have not taken up the matter concerning sewing and may never [do so]—I don't know.) For matter of economy and general representation, the Branch meetings could be held annually in connection with conferences—for usually a number of women attend Conference. Each Circle could send a delegate to the

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Branch meeting or as they see best. Delegate someone who goes anyhow, or appoint someone to be proxy. Circle could pay fare if they decided to do so.

We are including Sewing Circles, Young Women's and Children's Circles, Mothers' Meetings and Missionary Societies [and] Ladies Aids in the General Organization; for we have some of these in our churches. In Branches where they have Young People's and Children's Circles they might need a Young People's Secretary and Children's Secretary to make this work their special study. Sunday school classes are also taking collections. So you see it is not a general organization of Sewing Circles alone as you have been thinking, but of everyone who wishes to help. More individuals have sent money so far than Sewing Circles. One sister from Kansas sent \$50.00. One shut-in sent thirty cents birthday money. When I heard that, I said it was worth all the time I had put in, to give this poor crippled girl who had not walked for nine years a chance to help the poor heathen to know her God. One Sewing Circle sent one collection (this June) of \$30.00. Another Sewing Circle expects to send quarterly collections of about \$10.00 per quarter. Another large Sewing Circle has just taken action to send quarterly collections. One sister sent me \$25.00 last week for expenses. One Sunday school teacher told me at General Conference she read about the poor crippled girl [and] she asked her class of women if they could not hold quarterly collections; they said no, [and decided instead for] monthly and they are giving over \$3.00 per month—a class of women. One sister from far off Saskatchewan sent \$5.00. Do you think we should go on holding only meetings to discuss Sewing Circle work each time when people are so willing to give?

So far as delegates to a General meeting are concerned, the Branch secretary would be a member of [the] General Executive Committee, and her Branch would be supposed to pay her fare if she could or would not do so herself, or [if] she could delegate someone who would go anyway, so as to be more economical, or if no one goes, write

a letter stating her views. This part will work out of itself if there is money for expenses all right, if not then we must do with writing. The Branch secretary is supposed to send in an annual report of the work of her Branch.

We already know of a sister who will likely be sent to India with the money we are receiving.

While I have tried to be brief it has taken me a number of hours to think this out and write it down for you. I trust you will understand that this is only a general idea for you [in way of answer to your questions], and not thoroughly worked out:

1. Not a general organization of Sewing Circles but a general organization of home and foreign missionary endeavor including Sewing Circles, Mothers' Meetings, Ladies' Aids, Missionary Societies, Young People's and Children's Circles or Societies, individual Sunday school classes.

2. Meetings have nothing to do with General Conference. It has seemed best to meet then for a larger representation of women, and [for] economy. We work in cooperation and harmony with the Mennonite Board of Missions and Charities, which organization is under General Conference. . . .

5. Work in harmony with the General Society and develop the Branch work according to opportunities and needs.

6. Yes; but men will be treated courteously if they care to attend. . . .

9. We have started funds as follows: General, Sending and Support of Missionary to India, Support of Home Missionary. Others' needs met as we are able.

Clara E. Steiner to Emma King,
District Representative
Columbus Grove, Ohio
August 15, 1917

Dear Sister King,

. . . I have been wondering, since the General Conference place of meeting is changed from Virginia to Indiana if it is not possible that you may attend. We are arranging a program for a meeting at that time.

I would be pleased to meet you, I am sure, and believe we could ex-

plain to you more fully our efforts in person than by letter. I notice in my record of Sewing Circles that Kansas-Nebraska Conference has probably more Sewing Circles than any other Conference, and there may be new organizations as my record is about two years old. This fact should be the means of a good meeting. You must use your judgment and hold a meeting only if there are no objections. The purpose of our meetings is to create more interest in mission work, both in the home and foreign fields, and to help organize Circles where they have none, but desire to organize.

There is room for improvement in our Circles. We might do more than we do. Some have become interested in foreign work and are supporting Bible Women in India, and no doubt many others would do something if [the matter were] brought before them and they would learn how.

We have tried to have missionaries present at these meetings [to] talk to the sisters on how they may best help the missions, etc. Perhaps Sister Eash and some one or more from Kansas City Missions could give talks at a meeting. . . . You as a former worker could possibly tell the women some interesting things and give pointers.

The "fund" we have opened to send and support a missionary to India to work among women is receiving hearty support. If your meeting could see fit to take action in the support of this movement it would be greatly appreciated. We believe we could do more by united efforts than to work separately. If we should receive more money than needed we would support two missionaries or whatever is most needed at that time. It is really surprising what we women could do if we put forth the effort.

If I have not made myself clear, and I hardly have, be free to ask any questions resting on your mind. Hope to hear from you.

Sincerely, Clara E. Steiner
P.S. I understand my daughter Charity is staying with your brother in Chicago. She is there in summer school. I almost feel acquainted with you.

Mina B. Esch to Clara Steiner
Hesston, Kansas
October 22, 1917

Dear Sister Steiner,

Just a few lines to let you know we are home again after nearly three months of traveling in which time we visited in seven states and attended five conferences. We surely feel grateful to be at home again but also feel well repaid for the trip. We all keep quite well and everyone was so good to us, but most of all we have a better conception of how the churches are considering the great question of "Mission Work." For the most part, we have found the churches ready to do and to give, if there is someone to give them a little push—and many of them are already deeply interested in the work. We feel much encouraged and quite sure now that there will be at least two new missionaries to go out with us next fall, for "The Sisters" [the Women's Missionary Society] will be ready for one and the congregation at Tiskilwa, Illinois, has pledged for one; so surely the [Mission] Board will do the rest. We still have hopes for Brother and Sister Paul Erb; and she would be fine for the girls' school work if they could be placed there. However, I hope you as a Committee will be able to find a single sister, and we get this couple besides. From the letters we receive from the field, we fear there will be some more serious breakdowns if the workers there must carry the heavy responsibilities that they have now for very much longer.

We had a fine meeting at Manson of which I suppose Sister Miller has given you a report. I attended the [Sewing] Circle at East Union and gave a talk which they all said helped them very much; that day they pledged themselves for \$30.00 for the Women's Fund and also took their first Missionary offering which was \$38.35. Many of them wanted to pledge more but Sister Yoder said she would rather have more to send in, than to have less than was pledged; and for this year they would make it \$30.00, and perhaps more by another year. I had also hoped to be with the Circle at Wayland but it was the same day as East Union, so could

not; but gave a talk in the church the next day. They are not very well organized as yet, but Sister Miller is working with all those congregations, and will get them in line, I am sure; for she is fearless and much in earnest. . . .

Yours sincerely, Mina B. Esch

Clara Steiner to Emma King,
District Representative
Columbus Grove, Ohio
October 30, 1917

Dear Sister King,

Greetings. I made a short report from your letters and sent [it] to Scottdale. I thought the meetings [were] over for this year but had a letter from the sister in the Pacific Branch stating they may have one at their Conference next week. Western Branch reported a good strong meeting in Iowa. They are taking up the foreign fund and have already sent in several large collections.

I have now heard from all but one Branch, and all the sisters but one have accepted the position to which they were elected and want to do what they can. This one wants a little more time to think. It may be she wants to find out first what others are going to do. She represents just several Sewing Circles.

It is really remarkable how the sisters have responded and say they have felt the need of more united and systematic work; and I am very hopeful that we may all learn and grow in the work together. Perhaps we all feel our inability to do the work justice as you do, but you know the Lord only requires of us what we are able to do. Another thing, people usually turn to the busy people when they want something accomplished. I am sure I would have plenty of work without this; for I must work out of doors so much since my husband is gone, and I must provide for my family. I have done man's work for weeks at a time. I cut some corn this fall but not so much as other years; but I must husk corn yet. My children are all in school and I am left alone to do the work. I keep the boys out as much as I dare but they cannot do everything. I should be out today but it is stormy.

Yes, one can do considerable through correspondence. I have helped a number of Circles organize, and otherwise, in this way. It seems more practical to do much of our work through correspondence, and our organization will be somewhat of a "correspondence organization." I don't remember if I gave you the names of the churches which have no organization in your Branch according to my list, or not. I have eight Circles marked for your Branch. The list is several years old and there may be others now. Believe I will give it, and let you revise it, and get the dates of organization where you can, also the number of members and average yearly or monthly collection, and some details as to how they are organized, regarding regulations or constitution and bylaws etc., as you can—if not before, [then] at your next meeting.

I have Pennsylvania, Hesston, Pleasant Valley, Protection, West Liberty, [Kansas]; La Junta and East Holbrook, Colorado; [and] Roseland, Nebraska marked for Circles. The smallest Circle I have learned of is in a church of thirty-one members and they have been working for eight years. I used to take them no smaller than our church of seventy members, but have learned of a number smaller since. I will give you a list and let you work as the Lord directs and opens doors to you. Spring Valley, Canton, Kansas: 69 members; Catlin, Kansas: 42 members; Plainview, Texas: forty; Milan Valley, Jet., Oklahoma: 38; Springs, Manchester, Oklahoma: 24.

No doubt some of these churches are poor and struggling. I do not believe they should be encouraged in such cases to do much for city mission work but more for the poor in the home community, and for the city only work as they can and enough to find out how the poor in the cities live and let the stronger churches do the balance. But as there are constantly new Circles being organized it seems to us that it will not be so necessary for Circles to do quite so much work as formerly and I believe it would be good for each Circle to help with the foreign work—if only a few dimes for their own good—

aside from the aid they give to the cause.

It seems like it is the poorer, and small and far away churches who most appreciate our efforts of united work. They say they feel closer in touch with the church through it. This is one of the many advantages I see in organization. Say, what ministers did you consult regarding this work before your meeting? Some of your western ministers have encouraged us.

It would be nice if you could get in touch with the girls at Hesston through their mission study class. If you do not feel to take it up alone, you might consult Sister Eash or Sister Alta Erb. They would surely help you. We believe each Branch should have a young woman as secretary who would make it her special work with the young women in their Branch. In your case, she should probably be a Hesston young woman.

When you mentioned Alta Erb as being better qualified to do the work we are asking you to do, I concluded that you had not heard that Brother and Sister Erb may be sent to India next fall, and that we have been asked if the sisters would undertake to support Alta. I was told about them several times and that it is quite certain they are going. It seems strange to me you had not heard it, and perhaps it is not to be told around—and especially at Hesston. You had better not mention it, for they may not want it out yet.

I have felt that in case we support her it would be somewhat of a disappointment if the Kansas woman would not join us in this support through their Sewing Circle. Our experience has been that when Sewing Circles who have felt they have all the work they can do at home become interested in the heathen women, that their collections increase so they have been just as able as formerly to do all the work they had been doing. It was the case with us and of others I know. I know of one Sewing Circle that probably trebled their work when they branched out.

It may be, however, that you Kansas people are doing your utmost along this line; but it will not

do any harm to talk about it at least.

The one advantage I see in Branch organizations is that by having different officers the work can be divided so that no sister needs to give so much time and each one looks after her especial line and there is someone to arrange for a meeting and program, a secretary to take the notes, etc.

The Indiana sisters are meeting at Elkhart November 14 for the purpose of organizing. I am invited to attend but am not sure I can go. Our Committee of five has had no meeting yet, and if we could meet then I would be tempted to go.

Our Ohio women have taken no action yet. In fact they have not been consulted. The meetings we have had in Ohio were general, but we hope to bring the matter before them another year.

But a number of Ohio Circles have been doing foreign work for a number of years, and several of the larger Circles are now taking quarterly collections. One I know of expects to give \$10.00 cash [each] quarter. We are kept quite busy in Ohio, too. We have two charitable institutions, and three city missions.

I am trying to keep you Branch secretaries informed. I hope to hear from you.

Sincerely, Clara E. Steiner

Stella R. Kreider to Clara Steiner
Goshen, Indiana
March 5, 1918

Dear Mrs. Steiner,

Your letter of last week was somewhat of a surprise. I planned to answer when Mrs. Burkhard would return but I decided today it would not be wise to wait until she returns. Ruth was here a short time ago and she answered a few questions relative to the work—questions which were quite hazy in my mind.

I must say, Mrs. Steiner, you are to be congratulated; for the progress of the Women's work speaks for your efforts. I am feeling more and more [that] many things can be done among the women of our church if only time and effort is given in helping them.

My work among the girls is intensely interesting. They all take such a splendid part and are eager to make their contribution. We first made small articles to sell in order to secure some money with which we would be able to make our purchases. Then, in their enthusiasm the girls solicited from the city people.

We are now working upon two layettes for the Belgian babies. When they are completed we plan to make small children's clothes for missions, etc.

As to my suggestions in reference to the constitution, I have a few which you may consider as you please. They are given in the light of my limited experience with our own small Circle here at Goshen.

As I understand from Mrs. B[urkhard], the plan in its fullness

John Horsch Mennonite History Essay Contest Winners 1978-79

Class I (Seminary and Postgraduates)

First place..... Rachel Fisher
Second place..... Wayne Hochstetler
Third place..... Daryl Climenhaga, tied with Millard Garrett

Class II (College Juniors and Seniors)

First place..... Thomas Kreider
Second place..... Mark R. Wenger
Third place..... Brent Godshalk, tied with Larry Litwiller

Class III (College Freshmen and Sophomores)

First place..... Ken Jantzi
Second place..... Keith Graybill, tied with Bruce Entz
Third place..... Kent Richard

Class IV (High School Students)

First place..... Miriam Voran
Second place..... Brenda Hartman
Third Place..... Kathy Meyer

—Leonard Gross, Contest Manager

is for three auxiliary Circles among girls: 1. The small girls, probably from 9-14 years; 2. Those as in my group from 14-18; and then 3. Another Circle composed of unmarried girls above 18. If that is true, this constitution would be for the "Girl's Home and Foreign Missionary Circle" instead of "Young People's."...

In reference to the name I would suggest that the general name "Girl's Home and Foreign Missionary Circle" be used and then each local organization could adopt a name preferable to them. Now, for instance, our girls chose the name Hildegard for our *local* society—drawn from the legend of the "Three Weavers." To them it is a *very significant* name. To many it would be "Greek." I also prefer Circle to Society because of the prejudice (unfortunately) held against the word Society. My *personal* preference is Society; but for Mennonite women it is hardly advisable.

Please consider these suggestions as given by an unexperienced girl; for that is what I am. I was reluctant in giving them, yet I know you wrote for that purpose. I am ready to loyally support all such constructive work among our women. I am intensely interested in our girls' work. I hope to be able to make a small contribution yet.

I hardly feel capable of acting as general secretary for Young People's work. In reference to that I could not say definitely, not knowing [where] our permanent home may be.

Kindest and best wishes to you and love to the girls.

Sincerely, Stella R. Kreider

Ruth Yoder, Society Treasurer,
to Clara Steiner

Bellefontaine, Ohio
February 24, 1919

Dear Clara,

Well, I have been to Indianapolis and I surely had a fine and profitable time. Joe went with me and we had been registered with the Goshen delegation which numbered ten, so we felt quite well at home. There were several missionaries there from Africa, one from China, one from Burma, several from India, besides other speakers. One

man from Cincinnati, Ohio (Rev. Bert Wilson), spoke on tithing. It was fine. He says (and I believe it) that it doesn't make any difference how poor a man is, he can tithe if he *wants* to—not tithe in the sense of the law, but under grace. The conference was fine and the people were very hospitable.

As to [the] Circle letter I am agreed if the rest are, but we will have to talk to Mary.

I want to send in my last quarter's report soon. I have \$558.26 for that quarter, but am not getting much now. I got \$48.40 from our secretary last night for Mrs. Friesen [missionary in India]. Daniel Kauffman and I.J. Buchwalter are to be at Bethel tomorrow evening. No one seems to know their business or whatever.

That is what is bothering me now. There does not seem to be anyone boosting missionary enterprise now, and this is the grand opportunity of the age. It seems like our people cannot pay attention to more than one thing at a time. And they even take the missionaries that were to go out [and place them elsewhere]; and they didn't have any to spare either. That means a delay of a year at least for four of them. I wonder how hard they are working it to get passports out of the country. They need not expect the government to come to tell them when they can get passports.

I heard a man say at Indianapolis: "I must go to Washington and look after my passport. I can't wait any longer. There is so much red tape connected with it." He wanted to go to Africa. Of course he was no Mennonite but it seems to me the Mennonites aren't working it very hard or they would be able to get out before long. I take [as correct] what you said concerning the Board in your other letter. I have thought of that side but I am wondering if you would be willing to go under them or have your daughter go under them. It seems to me there ought to be something, I mean a fund, open in the way of supporting some work in connection with the mission in India that people would not stop giving because they know we have enough for a missionary or two. That is bad business.

Maybe you think I am dreamy; but it seems to me it is time somebody is dreaming. I want to write to Mary soon. I hope the [printed] blanks will be ready soon. I think our Sewing [Circle] can give a part of a report at least. An explanatory letter with the blanks will be a good plan—perhaps save you a lot of private correspondence. Must close.

Sincerely, Ruth A. Yoder

Ruth Yoder, Society Treasurer
to Clara Steiner

Bellefontaine, Ohio
May 21, 1919

Dear Clara,

I received your letter today. I guess, too, one day it's up and the next day it's down. I am very much disappointed in J.S. Shoemaker. I surely would have stood for it that he would raise no objections. However, I am quite doubtful if that is really J.S. Shoemaker. I am rather of the opinion that it is D. Lapp, at least the sentiment sounds like what I have heard of him; but if it is not J.S., I think he ought to have backbone enough to stand for what he thinks. I do not mean that harshly. I have very much respect for J.S. Shoemaker.

As to taking this affair to all the District Conferences, I fear there would be such a mix-up that the thing would have to die; but no doubt that is what some of them would like. I think it is a pity that every onward movement of the church must be opposed not by the world but by the "high" of the church.

As to getting the sanction of the General Conference to go on and organize—if this is done that way, it is the first progressive movement of the church that got under the General Conference before it proceeded. The General Conference has held itself to be advisory rather than authoritative.

Usually a movement is started by individuals, and as Royer said at conference last summer, after the work has gone so far, it cannot be gainsaid; people begin to recognize it.

Who is opposing this work anyhow? I don't believe it is the women, or many of the men; but

where one man can set a nest on fire, the fire spreads. My, my, when will men see the big problems and opportunities of the church? It is a shame, it seems to me, to have to say as a mission board that we need no more money. The program of the church is not large enough. Why don't they get busy and give the women and young men a place? If they aren't careful the whole thing will slip away.

I think we have gone too far to call the meeting off. It seems to me such a thing would breed distrust and insincerity. Perhaps if Shoe-maker hears that S.C. Yoder and C.Z. Yoder were favorable, and gets away from D. Lapp, he will change his mind.

I think surely I returned that statement from that committee. Be sure to go. I think the Executive Committee, I mean our Central Committee, should get together. I should like to talk things over with you and Mary. Had a letter from Mary today suggesting that we all go from Chicago together.

Sincerely, Ruth A. Yoder
[P.S.] I have been thinking some of going a day or two early and stopping in Goshen. I am not sure, however. Wish you could do that, too. Let me know your plans.

Mrs. W.H. Miller,
District Representative,
to Clara Steiner

Wellman, Iowa
July 22, 1919

Dear Sister Steiner,

Greeting. A few lines this morning. I have been very busy since you left here, but I feel now that my hard work is about all over; had the thrashers last week. Now I thought I would go over the garden again, and clean the yard again, and then I am about done. . . .

I was down to see Mrs. Yoder the other evening; read your letter there, and several others from South America. The three Circles here will sew for those this month and also give \$10.00 per Circle to help buy stockings, underwear and those things. We wondered if there was more money than was needed for that, why not send it to them and tell them to buy what dishes they need? In buying whole sets,

you get so many you seldom need [than] if they buy what they need and what is most servicable.

I see in the daily paper they had such a terrible storm at Buenos Aires; I wonder so about T.K. [Hershey] and Shanks [Mennonite missionaries].

Well, I have wondered so about what the outcome of our meeting will be and how it is going on. I have been told that Bro. D.G. Lapp is going to bring it before the General Conference and have it decided upon. So it will depend on how many "Mennonites" are there—J. M. Kreider, Dan Lapp and the two Benders [George and D.H.]. I have been so anxious and wondering about it.

I was also informed that there ought to be men in these women's meetings [as] they are going too far. Ha! Ha! Is it necessary to put on the brakes or shall we stop and take them in as we used to sing: "Roll the old chariot along; If the preacher gets in the way, we'll stop and take him in."

Did you get money enough to pay your carfare? Now be free and tell me. All this money has been turned in as your and Mary Burkhard's carfare. Now if you did not get enough to pay your way, say it, and we will send more.

Well, I must get to work; it is cool this morning, I ought to hoe. Write when you have time, wish I could have been close to your cherry trees—cherries were not much this year. I only canned eight quarts. Unless it rains soon the blackberries won't be very much either. Well, I must go; write when you have time.

With love, Mrs. W.H. Miller
[P.S.] Paid out \$53.39 for relief work since June.

Mrs. J.S. Gerig,
Executive Committee Member,
to Clara Steiner

Smithville, Ohio
February 29, 1920

Dear Sister Steiner,

Greeting. Received your letter and report blank. I have no suggestions to offer; I think it is all o.k.

I have been wanting to write to you for some time concerning the Women's Aid Department. I re-

ceived a letter from Sister Burkhard and also a copy of the report of the meeting held at Elkhart in August. I was almost surprised to hear that the Women's Missionary Society was still living; thought perhaps it had died in the [hands] of that committee; and still I could not believe it could die such an easy death. Sister Burkhard asked if I could be present at the committee meeting. Now I am sure I would like to be with you, but I feel my presence would hardly cope with the extra expense it would make, and again from the resolution she sent me. If I received it correctly, the General Mission Board is assuming all the authority to organize the Women's Aid Department and the sisters are simply asked to carry it out. Might be another reason I would hardly deem my presence necessary. I presume our former constitution of last June is not workable in the minds of some people. I think women have a right to stand independently for interests peculiarly their own, and if we are able, I think the Women's Aid Department should handle its own funds, or if we decide to turn it over to the general treasurer of the [Mission] Board, that he be instructed to keep a separate account of same and apply all funds under the instructions of the Women's Aid Department. With a few small changes, my sentiments would be to retain our Constitution we had worked out last June; the Women's Aid Department should elect all its own officers and simply hand [the list] to the Board for its ratification. I wrote a letter similar to this to Sister Burkhard.

Flu is quite prevalent around here. We had a siege of it, but are about recovered for which we feel thankful; hope this may find you all enjoying good health. May I hear from you soon.

Sincerely, Mrs. J.S. Gerig

Crissie Shank,
Secretary of Literature
to Clara Steiner

Orrville, Ohio
August 5, 1921

My dear Mrs. Steiner,

When we began our Mission Study I remember we spoke about

asking Scottdale to handle the books for us. Perhaps it was I who said you had better do it, I don't remember. I have just been asked to send the address of the publishers of "Lamplighters Across the Sea" to them [the Mennonite Publishing House at Scottdale]. It seems the Women's organization is blamed for *promoting* and not *co-operating*. I understand that if it would co-operate more with the powers-that-be, it might promote more to their liking. Perhaps you knew all this before; but I did not, so I'm telling you immediately. I see no reason why Scottdale should not handle the books for us if they desire; and if you write and ask them to do so, I shall send a letter to our Circles telling them to order from them. I mean to write concerning the Reading Course for next month anyhow.

Now, I'm going to be frank again and tell you that it seems [that] you in particular are blamed for not wanting to work with the Publishing House. I'm sure it is a mistake, so perhaps you can do something to correct the impression.

Uncle Isaiah Royer knows about everybody's business pretty well, and sometime ago *he* criticized me for not co-operating more. At that time he wanted us to co-operate better with the General Sunday School Committee. At the time I said, "We'll discuss it." He wanted Ruth Yoder to do it at Sunday School Conference and she can tell more about it.

If by "cooperating" the powers-that-be want us to do nothing but what they dictate *first*, then I'm *opposed*; if they really want us to co-operate, I am in favor to do it. If you were to write the secretary of the General Sunday School Committee, Uncle Isaiah himself, asking him to tell you how they would like to have you co-operate with them, would he put it on paper? He is usually reluctant to say anything definite.

I'm so ignorant! I'm wondering if it's jealousy, or if the women deserve some criticism and could help matters.

I'll think of you tomorrow.

—Crissie Shank

Recent Publications

Fetzer, John Earl. *The men from Wengen and America's agony: the Wenger-Winger-Wanger history*. Kalamazoo, MI: John E. Fetzer Foundation, ca. 1971. Available from publisher: 590 W. Maple St., Kalamazoo, MI 49008.

Weaver, Sarah M. *Peter Weaver Family History, 1748-1978*. Pp. 144. \$3.00 plus postage. Order from the author, Route 1, Wilmot, OH 44689.

Dietrich, Nancy Ann. *The Dietrich Family Tree*. Pp. 63. Order from the author, 344 Ruby Street, Clarendon Hills, IL 60514.

Wyse, Olive. *The Sebastian Gerig Family*. Pp. 47. Order from the author, 1804 South 12th Street, Goshen, IN 46526.

Dietrich, Nancy Ann. *The Families of Johann Martin Rau and Johann Conrad Bohne*. Pp. 134. \$10.00. Order from the author, 344 Ruby Street, Clarendon Hills, IL 60514.

Klassen, Ernest J. *Genealogy of Abraham Riediger, 1782-1978*. Pp. 206. \$15.00. Order from the author, 467 Park Blvd. E., Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P OH2.

Eash, Levi T. *Eash Family Record and History*. Pp. 638, plus index. \$6.00. Order from Robert L. Roscoe, 252 Churchill Street, Johnstown, PA 15904.

News and Notes

Herald Press has ordered the twelfth English edition of *Martyrs Mirror*, which chronicles fifteen centuries of Christian torture and martyrdom from the time of Christ to A.D. 1660. The first American edition of *Martyrs Mirror* was a translation of the 1660 Dutch edition into German which was printed at Ephrata Cloisters in Pennsylvania in 1745. The first English edition was published in 1837 at Lampeter Square, Lancaster, Pennsylvania. Since the fourth edition in 1938 the book has been published at Scottdale, Pennsylvania, by Mennonite Publishing House (Herald Press). The continued availability of this monumental volume (1,160 pages of type arranged in double columns illustrated with

graphic line drawings) is meant to strengthen Mennonites in the non-resistant faith of their forebears.

The eighth printing in booklet form of Harold S. Bender's classic lecture, *The Anabaptist Vision*, is being released by Herald Press. This will bring to 13,500 the number of copies in print. Melvin Gingerich wrote, "As long as Christians cherish the concept of a believers church or a free church, those who read Bender's essay will be strengthened in their faith and will continue to thank God for the heritage left them by the Anabaptist of the sixteenth century."

The 32-page booklet, *Mennonite Confession of Faith* (Herald Press, 1963) is going into its twelfth printing with more than 50,000 copies in print. This official statement of Mennonite beliefs was unanimously adopted by the Mennonite Church in its 1963 sessions at Kalona, Iowa.

The fourteenth printing of a small (4" x 6") black hardcover book first issued by Jehn S. Coffman and John F. Funk in 1890 is now available from Herald Press. *Confession of Faith and Minister's Manual* contains the Dordrecht Confession of Faith (1632), The Shorter Catechism, Forms for Baptism, the Lord's Supper, Marriage, Ordination of Bishops and Ministers, Funeral Services, Benedictions, and more. Part of the material was translated from the German work published in Canada by Bishop Benjamin Eby in 1840.

Book Review

Mennonite Business and Professional People's Directory 1978. By J.J. Hostetler (ed.). Scottdale, Pa.: Mennonite Industry and Business Associates, 1978. Pp. 160. \$12.50.

This recent (third) edition lists 7,500 names of Mennonite business and professional men and women, over four times the number of the first edition in 1974. (Order from J.J. Hostetler, 2000 South Fifteenth St., Walnut Ct., D4-2, Goshen, IN 46526.) L.G.

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In Loving Memory of Emmy Arnold 1884-1980

Gertrud Hüsey

On January 15, 1980, Emmy Arnold was called into Eternity at the Woodcrest Bruderhof (Rifton, New York) shortly after her ninety-fifth birthday. For only part of her long life, from 1907 to 1935, was she at the side of her husband Eberhard (1883-1935). Eberhard, Emmy, and her sister Else von Hollander were the founders of the New Hutterian Bruderhof in the Rhön Hills of Germany, not far from Frankfurt am Main. Today there are three Bruderhof communities in the USA and one in England; they are known as the Hutterian Society of Brothers.

A Christmas child, Emmy von Hollander was born on December 25, 1884, in Riga, Latvia, and to the end of her life her whole being radiated the joy of the Christmas message. The von Hollander family had come to the Baltic region from Rostock, Germany, in 1684. For generations they held responsible positions in the city administration of Riga and had considerable influence on its cultural and church life. To Emmy's grandfather Heinrich von Hollander fell the task of handing over the administration of Riga to the Russians in 1889. The official Russianization of Latvia caused Emmy's father, Johann Heinrich von Hollander, to emigrate with his family to Germany in 1890.

Emmy's childhood and early youth in Jena and Halle were very sheltered. Early in life she set herself an inner goal; the death of her baby brother and soon after that of her younger, fourteen-year-old sister had a deepening effect on her character. At seventeen she helped as a volunteer in a children's hospital, and later she took a nurse's training. Her love for Jesus made her long to serve others.

Halle was at that time gripped by a revival stimulated by men like Ludwig von Gerdell, that stirred the educated circles particularly.

Emmy declared publicly her decision to follow Jesus. At these meetings she met Eberhard Arnold, a young student and leader in the German Christian Student Union, who gave lectures and led Bible study groups. Eberhard and Emmy's engagement was placed under their unity in Jesus, under God's will. Both were ready to take upon themselves whatever God might demand of them. They sealed their

resolve by receiving believers' baptism.

Both resigned their membership in the established church, and Eberhard had to change his course of studies from theology to philosophy and education. His father, Carl Franklin Arnold, taught church history at the University in Breslau. His paternal grandfather, Franklin Luther Arnold, was pastor of a Presbyterian church in the United



Emmy Arnold

States who had been strongly influenced by Charles Finney; as a young missionary in Sierra Leone (Africa) he met his future wife Maria Ramsauer, who came from Oldenburg near Bremen. The couple lived in Ohio but had their two oldest sons brought up and educated in Bremen by the Gildemeisters, a believing Christian family. The older of these two boys was Eberhard's father.

In the early years of his marriage Eberhard continued his public activity, with the support of the German evangelical revival movement. He devoted his time to writing articles and lecturing on current topics such as present-day religious struggles, the suffering and oppression of the masses, social distress, and early Christianity in our time. He pointed to Jesus as *He really was*. Emmy helped her husband to cope with the inner need of people who were moved by these meetings, particularly girls and women. Her deep religious faith and purity of soul gave them new hope. Eberhard and Emmy became acquainted with misery of body and soul and gave help wherever they could. They felt clearly that they could never keep a savings account for themselves or their children. At the end of each year they cut down their bank account to just enough for the next few weeks and gave the surplus to people in need.

The outbreak of World War I found the little family in Tirol, where Emmy's sister Else von Hollander had joined them. Eberhard was recovering from tuberculosis of the lungs and larynx. Together these three used this time of retreat to find answers to the question of what it means to follow Jesus, namely that a man's inner life must penetrate every corner of his life, inner and outer. At that time Eberhard began writing his *Inner Land*.¹ All three immersed themselves in the writings of the sixteenth-century Anabaptists.

There followed five years of activity from 1915 to 1920 in Berlin, where Eberhard was appointed Secretary to the German Christian Student Union. He built up the Union's publishing house and worked on the editorial staff of its monthly, *Die Furche*. Before and after the end of the war, Eberhard and Emmy found themselves deeply involved in the burning controversial questions of that time: What is our attitude as Christians to the status quo—economy, state, church, schools? Surely our confessing to Jesus and his sermon on the Mount commits us to a brotherly life without possessions (in protest against militarism), obeying God's voice rather than human laws!

Around the town of Schlüchtern in Hesse there were religious socialists who were influenced by the Blumhardts (in particular the son Christoph Friedrich), Hermann Kutter, and Leonhard Ragaz. They represented the social demands of Christianity and the connection between capitalism and war. This group called on Eberhard to help them with their periodical *Das neue Werk* and to start their publishing house, Neuwerk-Verlag. He did that in the firm conviction that a man's words must be one with his daily life, and he soon moved with his family to the village of Sannerz near Schluchtern to start life in community.

Friends in the German Christian Student Union warned Emmy, now mother of five, not to take such a leap in the dark. Nevertheless, around Eberhard and Emmy there soon grew up a lively communal household. In 1920 the Neuwerk people and a few others who helped in the house, garden, and small farm pledged themselves to a brotherly life in community and complete sharing of goods. Emmy was their Housemother. The little community became the center of

the Neuwerk movement, so that Emmy had not only the basic household of about twenty grown-ups and children to look after, but every day, especially in the spring and summer, the many guests who were added to their number.

Disillusionment set in in 1922, and most of the friends of the movement returned to the old way of life, to conventional society. A very small group was left at Sannerz with Eberhard, Emmy, and Else. The years following this separation brought a deepening and a rethinking. Eberhard was working on a sourcebook of early Christian writings; through their witness the demands of total surrender to Christ became clear. From the same source, the peaceable Anabaptists of the sixteenth century had drawn strength for self-sacrifice. They gave an example of morally-pure communal living in their Bruderhof communities in Moravia (Czechoslovakia), where some of the old buildings and dwelling complexes are still standing.

Late in 1926 this little group, inwardly deepened, took the daring step of purchasing a larger farm in the nearby district of Fulda. This property was developed as the Rhön Bruderhof and included a small farm and garden, a turning workshop, a smithy, and a handicrafts department. For the work with children begun at Sannerz, a children's home was built, with an officially accredited school. The main communal task continued to be the publishing, lecturing, and service to guests.

The Bruderhof life thus built up, both inwardly and outwardly, bore the stamp of the sixteenth-century "brothers whom men call the Hutterians" and all that came to life in their writings. There was also correspondence with the Elder Elias Walter at the Standoff Bruderhof in Alberta, Canada, whose address Eberhard obtained from Dr. Robert Friedmann in 1926. The

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Articles appearing in this journal are abstracted and indexed in *Historical Abstracts*. Microfilms of Volumes I-XL of the *Mennonite Historical Bulletin* are available from: University Microfilms, Inc., 300 N. Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, Michigan 48106.

community was grateful to receive from this elder a number of writings that served to confirm and strengthen their life together. Among these were Peter Rideman's *Confession of Faith*, Andreas Ehrenpreis's *Brotherly Community: The Highest Command of Love*, certain Orders for community life, the Epistles of Jakob Hutter, and "Article Books" containing answers to all the problems facing the community in its beginning, such as the right attitude of Christians to government authority, to violence, and to property.

For the little community Eberhard was the spokesman or Word Leader and Emmy the House-mother. Her background as child of a large household and her nurse's training proved an excellent endowment for her new role. She had an open mind to the movements of the day and a longing to grasp more and more fully the meaning of the gospel. All this made her a stimulating example to everyone in the community, to the sisters, the young people, and the children in particular. Emmy loved singing, and her rich store of songs was adopted by the whole circle. Besides, she had the gift of putting their inner experience into verse and song. She stood at Eberhard's side as the most faithful helper and adviser in his life task.

To their great regret Emmy was unable to accompany Eberhard on his journey to the Hutterian Brothers in the USA and Canada in May 1930. The little brotherhood at the Rhön Bruderhof needed her. Eberhard had been invited to come in person to each of the thirty North American Hutterian colonies and lay before the Hutterian elders the longing for unity on the part of the German Bruderhof. On December 9, 1930, the uniting was solemnly carried out, and on December 19 Eberhard was confirmed in the Service of the Word. It was May 1931 when he returned to the little Rhön Bruderhof.

With the rise of National Socialism the Bruderhof was soon hard pressed. A second Bruderhof was founded in Liechtenstein to take in the school children, who were threatened with a Nazi school. This inorganic division of the community caused much outer and

inner need. It meant many journeys between the Alm and the Rhön Bruderhof and fundraising trips as far as England to put the new community on a better economic footing. Emmy was not always able to make these trips with Eberhard. Politically, such journeys were very hazardous, besides being extremely arduous physically owing to Eberhard's fractured leg, broken in 1933, which did not heal, partly because he never allowed himself any rest.

Eberhard Arnold was called into Eternity on November 22, 1935, after an amputation was performed on his leg. The whole year (1935) had been one of extreme exertion. For one thing, the pressures from the National Socialist authorities had to be faced. But what was more, the whole Brotherhood needed again and again to be led to a deeper commitment, and the inherent dangers of community life needed to be tackled as they showed up in this or that person: thirst for power or recognition, ambition, selfishness, halfheartedness, and the like.

The strength of Emmy's faith was proved in a very moving way by how she stood this very great loss. She gave herself completely to her motherly task for her own sons and daughters, still quite young, and for all brothers and sisters in the community.

After 1936 Emmy experienced the establishment of the new Cots-wold Bruderhof in England. In April 1937 the Gestapo confiscated the Rhön Bruderhof; soon after, the Alm Bruderhof was closed down. In 1940, after World War II had begun, she emigrated with the community from England to Paraguay, South America.

In the fifteen years Emmy spent there she always had encouraging and stimulating words, often helping brothers and sisters with humor, in an extremely hard beginning. In hours of great need she always pointed to the center. She guarded the embers of the fire that had been alive in the early years of the community, even when powers were at work that threatened to choke it.

When in the late fifties the wind of the Spirit brought new life to the Bruderhof communities, Emmy

was gripped by it heart and soul. She came to the United States in 1956 and remained an active part of this newly-given life among brothers and sisters at the Woodcrest Bruderhof, Rifton, New York. Here she was still able to witness in her life and in writing to what God had given her and Eberhard as His obedient servants.

The following verse from a song Emmy wrote in 1931 is a fitting conclusion to this attempt to convey something of her life and work:

*O Holy Spirit, infinite God,
Among us send Thy mighty Word.
O vanquish Satan's dark domain,
That we today the victory gain,
From darkness turn to Thy true
Church.*

¹Eberhard Arnold, *Inner Land: A Guide into the Heart and Soul of the Bible* (Rifton, NY: Plough Publishing House, 1976).

**Publications by Emmy Arnold,
Plough Publishing House, Rifton,
New York, USA:**

*Inner Words for Every Day of the
Year*, 1963 (compiler).

When the time Was Fulfilled, 1965
(coauthor).

*Torches Together: the Beginning
and Early Years of the Bruderhof
Communities*, 2nd ed. 1971.

"Eberhard Arnold's Life and
Work" in Eberhard Arnold: *A
Testimony of Church Community
from His Life and Writings*, 2nd
ed., 1973.

*Seeking for the Kingdom of God:
Origins of the Bruderhof Com-
munities*, 1974 (coauthor).

News and Notes

"A Chronological Index to the Jacob Mensch Letter Collection" has been prepared by David Schmitt, Jeffery Godshall, and Joseph S. Miller. This invaluable register of the Jacob Mensch Letter Collection spans the era 1860 to 1911, and encompasses a total of ca. 1,600 letters. Although the original letters are in the Eastern Pennsylvania Mennonite Historical Library (Christopher Dock High School, Lansdale, Pennsylvania), microfilms are available in various research centers throughout North America, including the Archives of the Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind.

Mennonite author Barbara Smucker, Waterloo, Ontario, has received the Canada Council's award for the best children's book published in Canada in 1979. The award came for her book *Days of Terror*, published by Clarke-Irwin.

This work of historical fiction deals with the experiences a 12-year-old Russian Mennonite, Peter Neufeld, might have had during the terror of the Bolshevik revolution and the subsequent Mennonite migration from Russia to Canada in 1924.

Last year, another of Smucker's books, *Underground to Canada*, was listed among the ten best Canadian Children's books.



Benjamin Frantz, M.D., 1824-1907

**An Early Mennonite Doctor
J.C. Wenger**

Benjamin Frantz, born October 17, 1824, was an early Mennonite physician who did more than "read medicine" and accompany older doctors before starting practice. Frantz (1824-1907) started out as usual, both reading doctor's books, and learning medicine from two physicians, a father and son, Doctors Martin and Jacob Musser of Lampeter Square, Lancaster County, Pa. A year later (1843) he transferred to the office of A.H. Senseney (a form of Sensenig or Sensenich), a doctor of Chambersburg, Franklin County, Pa. The fall of 1844 he entered Jefferson Medical College, a new school in Philadelphia, Pa., where he graduated two years later in the first class, at the age of 21.



Office and residence of Benjamin Frantz, Waynesboro, Pa.

Who was this Dr. Benjamin Frantz? His great-great grandfather was Michael Frantz (1687-1748) of near Basel in Switzerland, who came to Pennsylvania on the ship *Molly* in 1727, is said by the family to have served as a Lancaster County Mennonite preacher, and was buried along the Cocalico Creek. Preacher Frantz had a son, also called Michael, who was born in 1717 in Switzerland. The younger Michael had a son John who was born in Lancaster County in 1749. And John in turn was the father of Christian Frantz (1786-1862) of Lancaster County, a minister in the Reformed Mennonite church, who on November 21, 1808, married Anna Frick (1787-1836). The Frick line is as follows: Jacob (1684-1743), Jacob (1728-1781), Abraham (1759-1842), the father of Anna. The second Jacob Frick married Magdalena Herr, daughter of Hans Herr on January 11, 1739.

In 1826 the parents of Dr. Frantz left Lititz in Lancaster County and settled with their family near Fairview Mill, not far from Waynesboro, Franklin County, Pa. Upon graduating from Jefferson Medical College in 1846, Benjamin returned to Franklin County and set up practice in Waynesboro—in which service he continued for 64 years, specializing in diseases of the ear, nose, throat, and lungs. He and some Philadelphia doctors were pioneers in the use of chloroform as an anaesthetic.

On October 7, 1849, Dr. Frantz married his cousin, Mary Ann Ry-

der (1830-1898) of Fort Loudon, Franklin County, Pa. The Ryder line is as follows: Michael Ryder who was killed in Braddock's Defeat, 1755; Michael Ryder II (1744-1821) whose wife was Magdalena Newman; Michael III (1772-1812) married to Saloma Wortze (1773-1853); Michael Ryder IV (1798-1891) who married a Ryder named Mary (1804-1890), the daughter of Adam Ryder and Elizabeth Longenecker; Michael Ryder IV and Mary Ryder were the parents of Mary Ann who married Frantz. The doctor and his Mary Ann had 11 children, the fourth of which, Joseph, also became an M.D.

Dr. Benjamin Frantz was a Mennonite of the old school, wearing a black bowtie and a "Plain coat" (without a lapel). He was a member of the Mennonite congregation at Ringgold, Pa., which his father had founded in 1826, and which relocated in Waynesboro in 1876. Although he was a devout Mennonite, he did have his little disagreements with the rather strict leaders of his congregations on such items as bells on sleighs, rubber tires on his buggies, encouraging his children to play the piano, and perhaps even regarding the "Georgian" cornice on his three-story white house.

During the Civil War the wounded from both the Union and Confederate armies were brought from the Battle of Gettysburg the twenty miles to the office of Dr. Frantz—on the left side of his residence. The family has preserved the

communication of a Confederate Army officer to his superiors which reads as follows: "As Dr. Frantz has kindly attended to our wounded, and as he has lost all his horses, I think it would be simply an act of Justice to allow him to keep the two old horses which he has."

The *Biographical Annals of Franklin County* (1905) state: "Dr. Frantz is held in high esteem both by the profession and by the public. He has held many responsible professional positions and has done much in the way of literature and lectures for the advance of medical science ... and was one of the organizers and First President of the Waynesboro Academy of Medicine." Dr. Frantz died of pneumonia, February 1, 1907.

In the preparation of this tribute to Dr. Frantz, I was helped immensely by the patience and helpfulness of his grandson, Mr. Robert Benjamin Frantz, an architect of Saginaw, Michigan, who also supplied the pictures. Robert (1894-1971), the son of the doctor's eldest

child Samuel, wrote: "I very, very often drove around with him on his calls in the village or town of Waynesboro and around the countryside. He would introduce me to the many people but I would stay in the buggy while his 'call' was made. I was extremely fond of him, to say the least—everyone was."

The architectural firm of Robert Benjamin Frantz, F.A.I.A., is being continued in Saginaw by his son, Mr. Peter B. Frantz and Associates, Peter being the great-grandson of the doctor of Waynesboro.

Recent Publications

Wiebe, Peter. *A Genealogical Book of Mennonite Families: Wiebe, Behrends, Epp, Froese, Jansson and Regier*. Pp. 666. DM 50.00. Order from the author, Mühlenstr. 18, D-2433. Gromitz, West Germany.

Weaver, Harvey B. *Reuben M. Weaver Family History, 1851-1978*. Pp. 152. \$4.50 plus postage. Order from the author, Fleetwood

Road 4125, Fleetwood, PA 19522.

Kauffman, Mrs. J. Clair. *The Descendants of David Kauffman*. Pp. 78. \$6.00 postpaid. Order from the author, 1305 West Avenue, Goshen, IN 46526.

Schrock, Elden R. *The Family of John Ringenberg and Barbara Stahly*. Pp. 26. \$4.00 postpaid. Order from the author, 504 N. Locke Street, Nappanee, IN 46550.

Eby, Ruth L. *Family Record of Preacher Benjamin Eby and His Descendants*. Pp. 345. \$7.25 plus 70¢ postage. Order from the author, Route 2, Box 312, Williamsport, MD 21795.

Hostetler, Susie J. *Descendants of Susanna J. (Yoder) and Abraham H. Hostetler*. Pp. 112. \$4.00 postpaid. Order from author, Route 2, Box 167A Jamesport, MO 64648.

Graybill, Ruth. *Daniel and Susan (Ream) Yoder Family History*. Pp. 58. Order from the author, Dakota, Illinois 61018.

Yutzy, Ella, and Esther Youngberg, Comps. *A Branch of the Yutzy Family Tree: Solomon and Magdalena Kemp Yutzy and their Descendants*. Pp. 78. Order from Sol J. Yutzy, R. 1, Box 374, McMinnville, OR 97128.

Martin, Lydia H. and Evelyn M. Martin. *Family Record of Joseph H. Martin and his descendants, also including some of his ancestors*. 1975. Pp. 103. Order from Mrs. Evelyn M. Martin, Box 324, Maugansville, MD, 21767.

Yoder, Lillian L. *Descendants of Moses Kauffman, 1805-1872 and wife Lydia Plank, 1808-1886*. Pp. 39, plus 18-page index. \$4.75 Order from author, 212 South Tenth Street, Goshen, IN 46526

Mohar, Althea Nispel. *A Megli Memorial*, ed., Earl A. Boeckner. Pp. 410. Order from Earl A. Boeckner, 4040 Van Dorn, Lincoln, NB 68506.

Miller, Mrs. Susie A. *The Descendants of Casper and Mary Stuckey Schrock from the year 1745 to November 1, 1970*. Pp. 99. Order from Mabel Swartzendruber, 326 South Georgetown Road, Pigeon, MI 48755.

Buskirk, Esther. *The Family Tree of Josiah Martin and Sarah Clem-*



Picnic gathering at "the farm" around 1900: Elizabeth Landis, her sister Mary, her Aunt Mary, her sister Katherine, and "Grandfather Frantz."

mer. 1973. Pp. 31. Order from: Ezra Martin, Pleasantview Road, R. 1., Ephrata, PA 17522.

Beachy, Ezra. *Family Record of Jonas S. Beachy and Fannie Miller*. 1979. Pp. 225. \$7.00 postage paid. Order from author, 1408 Greencroft Drive, Goshen, IN 46526.

Huss, Arlene, et al. *The David and Anna Miller Story*. 1979. Pp. 430, including index.

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Book Reviews

Brotherly Community, the Highest Command of Love. By Andreas Ehrenpreis and Claus Felbinger. Rifton, N.Y.: Plough Publishing House. 1978. Pp. 133. \$2.00.

The Hutterian Society of Brothers' state purpose for publishing these two Anabaptist documents is "not primarily a scholarly one, (but) . . . rather . . . to offer a clear answer for those who ask (the) vital question today" namely, how can the old structures of injustice be transformed? This duo of early German documents, reworked to speak modern English, provides an impassioned witness.

In this small paperback book, Plough abandons the comparative soft-sell of their previous books and chooses to hit the issue of communalism of property pointedly and relentlessly. This is done by means of the writings of two early defenders of this expression of Christian faith, introduced by comments of the late Robert Friedmann that first appeared in the pages of

Mennonite Quarterly Review along with an earlier English version.

Undoubtedly many Christians will quarrel with the single and central assertion of this book, namely, that "the way of total surrender of property and sharing of all goods still is . . . the highest command" for all who want to follow Christ. The altruism that states that true love will produce community is here narrowed to say "Where there is no community there is no true love," with "community" defined as a total sharing of goods. Friedmann comments that Ehrenpreis was "untiring in seeking to convince the Brotherhood of the inescapable need for full community if the Church was to fulfill its purpose, namely, that of following Christ's command and being a Church of disciples."

The problem is that many Christian traditions both now and in New Testament times did not accept this definition of Christian purpose. Are we therefore to assume, for example, that the Corinthian Church was not a genuine Church of Christ, however imperfect? If not, why does the communal aspect not emerge more clearly in this, or any, of the Apostle Paul's letters? On the other hand, are we justifying a sub-Christian response by not keeping full communalism as our goal?

Ehrenpreis makes salvation depend upon our commitment to this evidence of perfection. He insists that "it is a decision of the will, not compulsion." He utilizes the German word *Gelassenheit*, which has no adequate single-word equivalent in English, to refer to the extent of gratitude and forsaking of self-will that he believes necessary for discipleship to Christ. He urges that we not "entertain the delusion that . . . it is not necessary to embark on community life in full surrender." He declares that community is "the cause" (emphasis his) and that the divine truth of the community is an absolute necessity. Felbinger (1560) rejoices that "God still has such a Church on earth, the gathering of those who live and work in true community, sharing all blessings of the Spirit and all temporal goods." He asserts that any other profession of Christian faith is false.

I was puzzled at first by the fact that the later document (1650) was printed first but in reading them both concluded that the Society's purpose was best met by the more dogmatic statement being first. Some readers might interpret this book's appearance as intimating a hardening attitude on the part of the Society toward their fellow-participants in the Anabaptist tradition. Judging from my own continuous contacts with the Society I have no reason to believe that this is the case, though this promulgation of their definition of the Church can be taken to reveal their true mettle. But then, when I discovered that maintaining silent prayer as a custom when guests were present was a conscious practice, I encountered this core of conviction.

Must we not continue in the spirit of Schleithem to rejoice in a unity that consists of our points of agreement rather than a too vigorous attention to the points on which we differ? I continue to thank God deeply for the living presence among us of Christian communal societies that call us to contemplate the fullness of unity toward which all Christians must ever strive. —Gerald C. Studer

Songs of Light; the Bruderhof Songbook. By Marlys Swinger and Gillian Barth. Rifton, N.Y.: Plough Publishing House. 1977. Pp. 543. \$9.00.

This beautiful hymnbook has been compiled and edited by the Hutterian Society of Brothers from the writings of Eberhard Arnold and many other sources. It consists of a Preface by the former Brethren seminary professor, Merrill Mow, A Word from Eberhard Arnold on Singing, Acknowledgements, and the hymns classified under three broad headings of General, Christmas, and Easter. This is followed by indices of topics, of German first lines and titles, and of English first lines and titles.

The book includes hymns representing a broad spectrum of Christian songs both in terms of history and musical style, as well as of theological perspective. It marks a milestone in the Bruderhof's pursuit over decades of collecting and selecting songs most useful to the

various needs and occasions of community worship and celebration. The Bruderhof sees this pursuit as a link in a more than four-century long tradition and practice. Bruderhof member Mow comments in the Preface: "The joy of heartfelt singing has characterized the Hutterian Bruderhof communities ever since Reformation times." Indeed it has, but it must be stated further that the tunes, rhythms, and words of the songs here gathered go far beyond the range of those generally used in Hutterite colony worship. And perhaps it is only fair to add in light of the contemporary prominence of charismatic worship that the expression of joy found here is of a more muted variety.

Gillian Barth is the Art Editor and the book is throughout decorated with beautiful drawings printed in a rust color. Each of the main divisions is given a full-page gold and black illustration with each sub-section marked by a smaller illustration and a brief quotation from the writings of Eberhard Arnold. Occasionally there are decorations between the staffs and lines enclosing the words and frequently also at the heading of a hymn or following it.

The two-page excerpt from a message given by Eberhard Arnold shortly before his death speaks of a particular sensitivity to the use of hymns which the Bruderhof continues to cultivate. He elaborated on the misuse of meaningful songs declaring that such use "borders on sin against the Holy Spirit." He warns against using a hymn that has for them become dead and adds "for this reason it is invaluable that various ones among us find new songs again and again." Consequently there is a wealth of riches in hymnody included here, including another set of stanzas reflecting the Anabaptist perspective to the tune of Luther's "A Mighty Fortress Is Our God," plus many choice negro spirituals.

The notations regarding each hymn's authorship and composer follows the hymn title and words/music rather than precedes it. So carefully have Plough books customarily been proofread and published that it was an unexpected discovery to find a page in the Index of Topics reversed so that the

listing went from "Kingdom" to "Mission and Outreach (cont.);" and then from "Praise" to "Light."

—Gerald C. Studer

The Wenger Book, a Foundation Book of American Wengers. Edited by Samuel S. Wenger et al. Lancaster Penn.: Pennsylvania German Heritage History, Inc. 1978. Pp. 1218. \$35.00.

The long-awaited Wenger Book is a book of extraordinary significance for Mennonite history. It brings together information on the descendants of Christian Wenger and Eve Grabel who arrived on September 30, 1727, in Philadelphia, on the ship *Molly*, and were married shortly thereafter. Of their eleven children two must have died in infancy, for they are merely named with the dates of their births. There are brief biographical sketches of two other children, one of whom may have died unmarried. The other married, but her descendants are not traced. Two-thirds of the book comprise the genealogical section, listing descendants of the remaining seven children to the seventh generation. Biographical information for individuals decreases with each generation. Individuals in the seventh generation, with the exception of the Whanger branch of the family, are merely named, without life dates or other facts. The Whanger branch includes more complete and up-to-date information, extending to the tenth generation in some instances, presented in different format and smaller type.

One-third of the book consists of introductory information, anecdotes and interesting information, limited genealogical information concerning other Wenger immigrants and families into which Wengers married, business enterprises identified with the Wengers, a bibliography of sources and several appendices.

This book could have been entitled a family history with more justification than many so-called family histories which are purely genealogical. The early part of the book deals with European backgrounds and the role Wengers have played in the Mennonite church and other denominations in America. Part II, "Anecdotes and In-

teresting Items," is a loosely woven anthology of excerpts from other books, brief sketches prepared especially for this book and some folklore. The barbership story, "The Quick Wit of Dr. Frank S. Winger," (Ephrata, Pa. druggist) is a variation of a story folklorists say is found in many regions and which Bennet Cerf's *Treasury of Atrocious Puns* gives a San Francisco setting.

Genealogists differ in their preferences for identifying individuals. The Wengers have chosen a generation-by-generation arrangement and a numbering system that identifies each individual by generation and order in the family (e.g., sixth child of ninth child of sixth child of fourth child of third child of first child of immigrant ancestor). Many of us who spend more time helping other people with their research than we do in tracing our own families, find a simple sequential numbering system (a system such as that used in the widely known Jacob Hochstetler family history) easier to use than a system that codes for generation and order of birth. For us, an index is of prime importance. We are hampered by the lack of an index to this book and are eager to see the editors' promise of one fulfilled.

The task of compiling genealogical information as extensive as what is offered here is prodigious. Questions of time and funds limit the scope of the project and the degree to which the accuracy of information supplied by others can be checked. In pages 437-743 (sixth generation, exclusive of the Whanger branch), approximately one-third of the persons are listed more than once because of several lines of descent, each time with information about birth, death, spouse, address, occupation and names of children, each time also with the code number for the other place or places where this person appears. If the compilers had simply entered that information once and allowed the cross references to lead the user to that one place, they would have saved themselves a lot of time typing copy for the printers and reduced the size of the book, which in turn might have lowered its cost. They might have found time, then, to compare information

from several sources, and attempted to solve discrepancies in data. For instance, my wife's parents appear three times. The names and order of birth of their children are different in each case and none of the three lists is correct.

The Wenger Book is designated a foundation book. Frequent stars at the end of entries signify "further research needed." This, with the limitations I have stated are a challenge to interested persons to carry on more manageable tasks of selecting branches of the family with which they are intimately acquainted, checking the accuracy of information given here, and extending the genealogy to later generations. To facilitate such research, the editors are placing their research materials in the library of the Lancaster Mennonite Conference Historical Society, 2215 Millstream Road, Lancaster, PA 17602. The Millstream Road address is also the address of the publishers.

—Nelson P. Springer,
Goshen College, Goshen, Indiana.

Ontario Fraktur. By Michael S. Bird. Toronto, Ontario: M.F. Fehleley Publishers, Ltd. 1977. Pp. 144. \$10.00.

Gradually the colorful though modest art form known as Fraktur is being drawn out of its quiet presence in private places and is being given its due by the students of folk culture and art. This "trademark" of the Pennsylvania Germans has been in considerable demand by antiquarians and museums for some years already and now happily a growing literature of a descriptive, illustrative, analytical and comparative nature is emerging. It began with a lecture to the American Philosophical Society by Henry C. Mercer, published in 1897, and was further advanced by the publication of Henry S. Borneman's significant work in 1937 and has since been further enlarged by the publication of many journal and privately printed articles by a variety of scholars plus the substantive books by authors such as John Joseph Stoudt, Donald Shelley and Frances Lichten.

The context of this art form's origin and promulgation is variously perceived: theologically, as the *media res* between Catholic affir-

mation of the image and a Protestant affirmation of the word (Bird) on the one hand, to the more psychological accounting which views it as the irrepressible creative urge of an otherwise pragmatic and austere people on the other.

This is not the first published Canadian study of Fraktur as the book claims, for it has been preceded by the unpublished master's thesis of Sheila Greenspan (University of Toronto, 1968), and the work of E. Reginald Good concerning the extraordinary Fraktur art of Anna Weber (see review in the July 1977 *MHB*).

The focus of Bird's study includes three principal Mennonite settlements of early Upper Canada: the Niagara Peninsula, Markham Township and Waterloo County. This art form found its way to Canada via Pennsylvania, having grown earlier out of a multitude of traditions in Europe, all of which were Germanic. It achieved a volume and popularity in the New World far beyond anything comparable in Europe; and because many of the surviving specimens of this uniquely Pennsylvania German art were produced within these groups descended from the Anabaptist wing of the Reformation, they are predominantly decorative and non-pictorial in nature.

Author Bird defines Fraktur as "A loose category which tends to combine calligraphic and decorative elements in order to produce an aesthetically pleasing work within the conventions of a religious ethnic tradition." He further analyzes it as consisting basically of two elements, the calligraphic and the pictorial. And while it may be said that Mennonite art forms are largely non-pictorial, yet within a somewhat narrow range and tradition, the pictorial is beautifully present.

Perhaps the glut of pictorial material that overwhelms us today both in print and on the airwaves has provoked the growing appeal of simpler media and a return to a more basic skill. Twentieth-century Westerners have long thought of handwriting as serving an expedient, rather than an aesthetic purpose. Although Fraktur writing is still being taught, says author Bird, among some conservative Mennonite groups, it is also staging a comeback among the more sophis-

ticated and progressive Mennonites.

The market for the practice of Fraktur art is alive and well in the Franconia Mennonite Conference district today. It is taught in the Penn View Christian Elementary School art classes. Graduates of Christopher Dock Mennonite High School receive a (printed) full-color Fraktur diploma upon graduation and local artists such as Roland Yoder, Esther Ruth Shisler, Roma Ruth, Clarence Kulp, Jr. and others are employed by local families, and boards and businesses to produce Fraktur-style certificates, mottoes, and the like to preserve a record of important events for their homes, and to honor community servants. Bishop John E. Lapp has taken up Fraktur writing in his retirement after forty years of leadership in the church, and is producing Fraktur illustrated passages of scripture for framing and hanging on living room walls, not to mention the births, deaths, and marriages he is being asked to inscribe on appropriate pages of Bibles.

Bird has not only illustrated his book thoroughly with 242 fine reproductions, many in full color, but he has also in his discussion of the art form commented on some of the more intangible but significant aspects of the practice. He notes that Fraktur art has represented a group tradition and has therefore been predominantly anonymous, since self-expression was considered an unholy egotism. While most of the modern Fraktur pieces, and some of the earlier, are inconspicuously signed, it is noteworthy that the art being produced by the Society of Brothers is largely anonymous to this day—and for the same reason as in an earlier day.

In addition to the more than one-hundred pages of illustrations, there are six chapters covering the fundamental elements of Fraktur, major decorative forms, and Fraktur in Pennsylvania, followed by another chapter on Fraktur in Germanic Ontario, and finally a treatment of itinerant Fraktur artists and Fraktur as religious art. The book is well indexed with a fine bibliography. I would only lament the failure to number the chapters in the text, as well as in the table of contents.

—Gerald C. Studer

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The Dissolution of the Rhön Bruderhof in Germany

Hans Meier

I

Early in the morning of April 14, 1937, officials of the Gestapo (Secret State Police), accompanied by about fifty armed SS (Schutz-Staffel, "Blackshirts" and police, invaded the Rhön Bruderhof and declared to the assembled community that the Neuwerk Bruderhof was dissolved, its entire property, including the assets of the Eberhard Arnold Publishing House, was confiscated, and all members were commanded to return to their places of origin within twenty-four hours. The order, dated April 9, 1937, was said to be based on sections 1 and 4 of the "Presidential Decree for the Protection of the State and the German People," dated February 28, 1933.

We asked to have this order in writing and, when that was refused, to have sections 1 and 4 read aloud to inform the members what the charges consisted of; this was also refused. Only later the Alm Bruderhof in Liechtenstein received a letter signed by the head of the Reich Chamber of Literature (*Reichsschrifttumkammer*), Berlin W8, dated August 6, 1937 (marked III/134. G3c/Pö), which confirmed the dissolution in writing.

The preamble of the above-mentioned decree stated that it was intended "to safeguard against communistic acts of violence hostile to the State." The sections referred to abolished freedom of speech, freedom of the press, and freedom of assembly; they introduced secret supervision of mail, telephone and telegraph, and gave the Gestapo the authority to search houses and confiscate property without judicial warrant.

For the same reasons the following day three of us (the members of the Neuwerk Bruderhof's executive committee) were taken into so-called protective custody at the dis-

trict administration office in Fulda because, they said, the population was so angry with us that they had to protect us from the wrath of the people. On April 26, 1937, the "protective custody" was changed to imprisonment pending trial by civil court, and we were charged with

fraudulent manipulation of accounts.

When the Gestapo took our fingerprints and photographs for their "rogues' gallery," we used the opportunity to protest against this false accusation. We were told with a smile that we were now prisoners



"Unwanted"

An artist's impression of the arrival of the Rhön Bruderhof members in Holland, printed in the Dutch newspaper *De Telegraaf*, April 25, 1937

of the Gestapo and could no longer escape because, even if the judge acquitted us, we would be transferred from prison to a concentration camp and considered enemies of the German State.

After the order of dissolution had been announced to the assembled community, all men of military age were ordered to report for a physical checkup, while everyone else was ordered to return to his place of origin. Every member without exception testified for the record that he or she had responded to the call of Christ and decided to live this life of Christian and brotherly community and therefore could not and would not return to his former life; further, that the love of Christ, which includes love to the enemy, rules out all war or military service, whatever the cost.

In those very days, two Lutheran Elders, David Hofer of James Valley (Manitoba) and Michael Waldner of Bon Homme (South Dakota), were visiting the Rhön Bruderhof. Their presence among us on that day, April 14—surely brought about by God—did not suit the Gestapo's plans at all. In David Hofer's diary-notes about those events we read the following:

"The police stood outside the dining room and spoke together. Then I went out to them and began to speak to them about this occurrence. I told them that what we had experienced here today was quite uncalled for, and that we had not expected such a thing of Germany. I thought they would have treated their citizens and peasants better than we had been forced to see and experience that day.

"Then they said to me, 'Why can't you show your obedience to the government like the others, and do as it says?' I told them clearly that we respected the government highly but that we could not obey what it demanded against our conscience. Then he asked me, 'To what extent?' I told them that the

word of God says I must love my neighbor and not kill him, and for this reason we could not obey the government. Thereupon they maintained, 'We do not want war either. We only want to make ourselves strong, because all fear the strong. If we are weak, everyone will walk over us, but if we are strong, they will fear us. Therefore we arm ourselves for war, but not because we want to go to war.'"¹

Perhaps this exchange with the brothers first made the Gestapo aware of the presence of two eye-witnesses of the dissolution, who on returning to North America would very likely report that the National Socialist government was persecuting Christians for their faith. The authorities were concerned to avoid any political criticism or even "horror propaganda" from abroad, since for his plans to attack Russia, his *Drang nach Osten*, Hitler needed a mood that was at least not hostile on the part of the Western nations. And so the Gestapo very soon resorted to a stratagem used in many other cases, that of framing up criminal charges against the community that would be condemned by any decent person. To this end, "the Gestapo had induced a creditor to sign a document stating that he felt defrauded because of an outstanding debt. The man at first refused, but in the end he gave in to the constant pressure from the Gestapo." (Dr. O. Eisenberg, attorney in Hanau/Main, in *Der Pflug*, 1957 Heft 2, p. 8) This was to be used for an indictment of the Neuwerk Bruderhof before a criminal court.

The judge in Hanau who took this case was under the supervision of the Gestapo, like everybody else. He took three months to investigate the charges, during which time we three members of the executive committee (Hans Boller, Karl Keiderling, and myself) were in prison, constantly under the threat of being transferred to a concen-

tration camp.

In the end the judge decided that the Bruderhof had not committed any criminal act. Because of tight Gestapo control, the judge could pronounce such a decision only if not the slightest legal suspicion remained. At the same time, on the basis of the material at his disposal, he saw through the machinations of the Gestapo. He must have been a man who, in spite of the power of the State, still had an inner feeling for justice and the courage to help wherever he could.

He chose the time to annul the warrant of arrest in such a way that the report he was expected to submit reached the Gestapo while the chief was absent for two days at a national rally. At the same time the judge informed our lawyer, who saw to it that a friend came straightaway with his car to pick us up at the prison gate and take us to a place some distance away. After that, Quakers helped us to reach the Dutch border. Here we were helped by a German border guard who had caught us trying to sneak across at night. He showed us the right way, after making sure that none of his superiors were around.

At that time there was another incident that showed how God's hand guided all events and moved the hearts of men. A few days before our release, one of us was taken under police escort to the medical officer for a physical checkup with a view to military service. On arriving, he refused to submit to this examination. By way of explanation he gave the officer in charge a letter in which all three of us explained our Christian reasons of conscience which forbade any participation in war activity or in preparation for war because that would mean sinning against Christ's command to love even our enemies. The commanding officer happened to be absent on this day, and those present did not want to make a de-

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cision on their own. So they postponed the checkup with the remark that this man was a prisoner and could not escape them in any case. And just in this interval God brought about our release.

Three days after the official dissolution of the Rhön Bruderhof, all the remaining members, with the help of the two Hutterian brothers, who were still there, left the country, carrying only what they had on their backs and in their hand luggage. A few—six grown-ups and one child—traveled to the Alm Bruderhof in Liechtenstein, and the remaining eighteen adults and thirteen children, including the men of military age, were taken to the Dutch frontier under police escort. In Holland they were received with great love and hospitality by Mennonites with whom the Bruderhof had already been in friendly contact. This group was faithfully looked after, first at Bilthoven and later at Elspeet, until they were able to emigrate to England, where they were reunited with the brothers and sisters at the Cotswold Bruderhof.

II

In connection with the attitude of the Bruderhof to the National Socialist State, and the opinion of the latter about the Bruderhof, two documents may be of interest.

On May 25, 1937, the District Court of Appeals (*Oberlandesgericht*) in Kassel replied as follows to the appeal made by us three arrested members against our unjust imprisonment:

"The complainants are members of the executive council of the Neuwerk Bruderhof at Veitsteinbach, which was dissolved on April 14, 1937, for State Police reasons, in accordance with sections 1 and 4 of the decree of February 28, 1933, of the *Reichspräsident* for the protection of the German State and its people.

"This society was founded by the late Professor Eberhard Arnold and consists of members of various nationalities and all kinds of denominations. Its aim was to put into practice the life of the early Christians in love, faith and personal poverty, and with a pacifist orientation. The Society was in close contact with the Alm Bruderhof in the Principality of Liechtenstein, with the Cotswold Bruderhof

in England, and with about forty Hutterite Bruderhofs in America. Founded in 1920, on a small property at Sannerz near Fulda, this Bruderhof community purchased in 1926 the Rhön Bruderhof at Veitsteinbach, which has now been dissolved and confiscated. This property has been remodeled for the purposes of the Society at apparently considerable expense, the greater part of which was obviously derived from donations of members and well-wishers. An elementary and middle school was set up with government subsidies, and later a children's home was built and a refuge was provided for wayfarers and the poor.

"The undertaking received continuous support from the government (*Systemregierung*) but in 1933 the school and children's home were closed, the receiving of guests was forbidden, and the government subsidies were suspended. The prohibition against fund-raising cut off other considerable sums, and the prohibition against selling the products of the Bruderhof turning-shop and the publications of the Eberhard Arnold Publishing House (run by the Bruderhof community) by traveling salesmen further reduced the Society's income severely. After 1933 the continuation of the enterprise was made possible almost exclusively by donations and loans from supporters and fellow

believers abroad. In 1936 a valuable printing press and a valuable library were sold abroad, according to the report of the attorney general (*Oberstaatsanwalt*) in Hanau, based on the investigations of the State Police. Part of the proceeds of these sales was ostensibly used for part payment of sizable current debts."

The document continues with the accusation we know about, of "strong suspicion of fraud"; the court rejected the appeal on the grounds of "suspected intent of escape to a foreign country."

The word "government" (*Systemregierung*) as used above refers to the former democratic government of the Weimar Republic. The community's printing press, library, and archives were formally "sold" to the Cotswold Bruderhof in England before they could be confiscated by the Gestapo, and the proceeds were in fact, not only ostensibly, used to make payments to our creditors.

To understand the economic situation of the Rhön Bruderhof at that time, the following must be taken into account. When Hitler came to power in 1933, the Bruderhof was in the process of building up. Dwellings and communal buildings were enlarged, and the farming was considerably improved, all this with the means contributed by new members. This was even acknowl-

EDITORIAL

For at least two reasons we have chosen to publish a lengthy article on the Hutterian Society of Brothers at this time. First of all, here is a twentieth-century story, reminiscent of the experiences of our earlier sixteenth-century Anabaptist brothers and sisters. It is a story, however, that has been interpreted heretofore from the "outside" only, namely, by the well-intentioned German Mennonite leader Michael Horsch (brother of John), who himself was caught up in the church-state dilemma of how much to compromise with the new National Socialist regime which was making great demands upon all groups, including the Mennonites. Since scholarship has understood the dissolution of the Rhön Bruderhof primarily through Horsch's eyes, it seems only fair that the Society of Brothers' experience, given their own understanding of events, be allowed to surface, complementary to—and at certain crucial points of the story, a corrective to—the Michael Horsch account of 1937.

Secondly, in these troubled times when our world scene is anything but "life as usual," it seems essential to ask ourselves again the central questions of conscience, ultimate allegiance, and meaning of life. Both the backdrop of 1937, two years before the outbreak of a major world war, and the existential response of a small yet mighty people of God, may well be significant foci for reflection, out of which we can the better respond in love in 1980 to the world forces at bay, as a strengthened people of God, in the light of a renewed, corporate faith.—L.G.

edged by the *Landeserbhofgericht*, a special administrative body set up by the NS government to protect hereditary farms from land speculation. This court nonsuited the legal proceedings attempted by a creditor who wanted to take advantage of the new political trend and whose claims would have destroyed what had already been built up.

The value of the Bruderhof was at all times much higher than its debts. But when the payment of these debts was demanded after the government had confiscated the entire capital, the community had to insist that the debts could not be paid unless the confiscated property was returned for free disposal. This the Gestapo refused to do. As is evident from the above document of the District Court of Appeals, the government (without putting it into so many words) had ever since 1933 tried to destroy the German Bruderhof, but they did not succeed until 1937. When the Bruderhof was finally dissolved, it was figuratively speaking as though one kicked away the last crutch of a man whom one has intentionally lamed, so as to be able to accuse him afterward of being completely unable to walk!

The second document is a letter dated June 10, 1936, signed by *Bürgermeister* Zeiher as from the local police of Veitsteinbach, District of Fulda. It explains the reasons why the Bruderhof was prohibited from selling the publications of Eberhard Arnold Publishing House and our turned wooden articles, by means of traveling salesmen. All those who knew *Bürgermeister* Zeiher personally are strongly under the impression that he did not write this letter himself, but that it came from "higher up" and was presented to him for his signature. The following is a translation of the original document:

"My refusal to issue licenses (sales permits) to four members of the Bruderhof (Hans Meier, August Dyroff, Adolf Braun, and Karl Keiderling) is based not on any personal untrustworthiness or unsuitability of these four persons, but exclusively on the fact that the propaganda emanating from the

Bruderhof is hostile to the National Socialist State. The Eberhard Arnold Publishing House is nothing else than part of the Neuwerk Bruderhof, which owns more than half the shares, while the remaining shares are owned almost exclusively by the leaders of the Bruderhof community. Therefore there can be no doubt that the Eberhard Arnold Publishing House is active in the same sense as the Bruderhof Society itself. This activity, however, is hostile to the National Socialist State.

"I refer to the events of the last three years, supported by the Gestapo dossier on the Bruderhof community. There can be no doubt whatsoever that the members of the Bruderhof community, who used to call themselves *Edelkommunisten* (idealistic communists), are still today rooted in a life philosophy, and make propaganda for it, that is completely communistic and opposed to the National Socialist State. For instance, they reject the absolute primacy of all matters pertaining to the national community (*Volksgemeinschaft*) and the State, and they do not recognize the basic National Socialist laws of blood and race [i.e., idolatry of the Germanic race and persecution of the Jews].

"Further, it is clear that the members of the Bruderhof community refuse to do any military service. When the new conscription laws came into force, the Bruderhof promptly sent all its members who were German citizens and of military age to their branch Bruderhof in the Principality of Liechtenstein, thus evading military service. The members of the Bruderhof declared publicly that they could not be National Socialists. I am far from wanting to infringe upon the freedom of conscience of the individual Bruderhof members, and as administrator of the local police I would see no reason for any police action if the Bruderhof community had restricted itself to its own circle and stopped recruiting new members. But they did not do this. On the contrary, the steady growth of their membership shows that they have developed a successful propaganda for their ideas. The activities of the Eberhard Arnold Publishing House merely serve this

propaganda for a life philosophy which, in my opinion, is hostile to the National Socialist State. Therefore I am not in a position to issue the licenses applied for. I ask that the appeal be rejected."

(Signed: Zeiher, June 10, 1936)

Several points in this document need to be corrected. For one thing, the members of the Rhön Bruderhof never called themselves *Edelkommunisten* but were at times given this name by others. We were not idealists, but ordinary sinful men and women who tried to live in complete community of life and goods on the basis of Christian faith and love.

The accusation that "they are still today rooted in a life philosophy (*Weltanschauung*) that is completely communistic" is misleading because what is meant here is political communism. Regarding the repeated assertion that the Bruderhof was hostile to the State, it has to be said that in fact the Bruderhof takes the same stand as most Anabaptists dating from the sixteenth century, in particular the Hutterian Brothers (see Peter Rideman's *Confession of Faith*²), who recognize the need for government authority, owing to God's wrath, and submit to it to the extent that it does not violate the love of Christ. (See Paul's Letter to the Romans 13:1-8, and Jesus' Sermon on the Mount in Matthew, chapters 5-7.) Thus the Bruderhof did not represent an anarchistic attitude although, as Zeiher's letter correctly states, its members rejected the absolute primacy of all matters pertaining to the national community and the State; they did not recognize the basic National Socialist laws of blood and race; they refused to do any kind of military service; they declared that they could not become National Socialists; and in spite of the ban they did not remain silent but publicly represented their faith and accepted new members. Moreover—and this must have been known to the Gestapo—they wrote letters to the government and to Adolf Hitler personally, warning them not to shed innocent blood.

The letter signed by Zeiher also shows that the Bruderhof must have been watched by the police since the beginning of the Hitler



The Rhön Bruderhof in Germany, ca. 1933

regime (see the reference to "the events of the last three years"). Probably the telephone was tapped and mail was intercepted, and everything about the Bruderhof was documented in the Gestapo files. It is a miracle that the public witness of our life, so carefully watched by the Gestapo, was still possible for a relatively long time. We can only see God's will and protection in this and give Him thanks for it.

On the other hand, this very fact caused mistrust in certain circles in Switzerland. They said there must be something wrong for us to be able to remain in Germany for such a long time. Especially among the Religious Socialists some felt we were "ambiguous" toward the Hitler regime and that we tried to be on good terms with Hitler, which was definitely not the case. The two documents I quoted above show quite clearly that the Gestapo did not think we were ambiguous. (See also Postscript.)

III

For all these reasons we deplore the fact that the *Vereinigung der Deutschen Mennoniten Gemeinden* (Union of German Mennonite Churches) supported the false accusations the Gestapo leveled against the Bruderhof, in the pamphlet published by Michael Horsch (listed as a source for the dissolution of the Rhön Bruderhof in the *Mennonitisches Lexikon*, Vol. III, page 497, and the *Mennonite Encyclopedia*, Vol. IV, page 323). Surely the assessment of the events at the Rhön Bruderhof was influenced by what the chairman of

the *Vereinigung Deutscher Mennoniten Gemeinden* wrote in *Mennonitische Blätter* (Elbing, 1937, No. 6), informing his readers that on June 11, 1934, the Mennonites gave up the principle of nonresidence.³ He emphasized that already in World War I the large majority of the members of the Union had taken up arms and that some Churches lost six percent of their members on the battlefield. The question inevitably arises whether this is not a falling away from the witness for which the early Anabaptists gave their lives.

¹Emmy Arnold, *Torches Together: The Beginning and Early Years of the Bruderhof Communities*, 2nd ed. (Rifton, NY: Plough Publishing House, 1971), pp. 222-23.

²Peter Rideman, *Confession of Faith: Account of Our Religion, Doctrine, and Faith*, 2nd ed. (Rifton, NY: Plough Publishing House, 1970).

³Reprinted in Michael Horsch, *Die Auflösung des eingetragenen Vereins Neuwerk Bruderhof, Post Neuhoof, Kreis Fulda* (Hellmannsberg, 1937), pp. 5-6.

Postscript

On November 16, 1933, the Gestapo organized a raid on the Bruderhof with over one hundred SA and SS men. As a result the Brotherhood sent Hans Boller and myself to Berlin on December 18, 1933, to inquire what further intentions the government had with regard to the Bruderhof. Eberhard Arnold always represented that we should start any inquiry at the top of the hierarchy.

In our archives I found a small notebook page, completely covered with shorthand notes that I had made directly after my visit to Berlin with Hans Boller. I found these notes only after writing the foregoing report. They have helped

to fill out the picture of the danger the Bruderhof was in as early as 1933. Using these notes, I will give a summary of that visit.

A top secretary of the Ministry of the Interior introduced us to Gestapo Assistant Chief Wittig at 8 Prinz Albrecht Strasse, the infamous Gestapo headquarters, Office 215, second floor. In the course of the conversation it became clear that the Gestapo raid of November 16 was the result of a report from Veitsteinbach, a neighboring village, that the Bruderhof had not participated in the plebiscite of November 12, 1933. (This was the time when Hitler had asked the German people to express their acceptance or rejection of his political direction. In fact we had answered at the polls with individual written and signed statements that we tried to represent by our whole life the way of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, expressing His love; at the same time we asked that God's will might be done, also through those in the government.)

We gave Wittig a copy of our letter of December 6, 1933, addressed to the Governor of Hessen-Nassau in Kassel and to the Gestapo office in Kassel. This letter confirmed our attitude of faith in the way of Jesus; it reminded the government of the task God had given them and expressed several concerns about the government's deviation from this task. The following is a summarized translation of some of these concerns:

—The present government increasingly represents absolute primacy of the State and teaches an ideology which causes us great concern. For anyone whose whole will is to obey God above everything else and to work for His Kingdom—and that is decisive for any Church bound to Christ—the above situation must needs bring about a grave conflict of conscience.

—It seems to us that the Church is in danger of losing the freedom of conscience of its members, who simply want to follow and obey Jesus Christ as their only Leader, Master, and Redeemer.

—In a special way, the freedom of speech and of education is indispensable to us for the apostolic mission of Jesus Christ. For the sake of this mission, all genuine Chris-

tians must obey God's call, looking neither to the right nor to the left. We request a clear statement, in how far it is still possible to carry out this mission in the German nation.

—Our consciences are deeply troubled by the question whether man, the State, and human laws are being placed above God and His Word, above Christ and His Spirit. All those who are called to follow Christ must honor God above all else and obey Him more than men.

—The apparently absolute belief in the "Aryan" and especially the Nordic blood or race raises our serious Christian concern that the God-given equal rights of different races are possibly being violated.

—History warns us of the grave danger that innocent blood may be shed.

Wittig then read passages from the files the Gestapo had collected about the Bruderhof. These files, according to him, incriminated us seriously. Among other things, Mrs. Emmy Arnold herself had called the community "Christian communism" in something she had written about the history of Sanerz. In the Bruderhof library, the raiding party of the Gestapo had found some "Communist literature and art books," for instance, woodcuts by Frans Masereel showing the social need and injustice in the world in much the same style as later Käthe Kollwitz did. According to Wittig, this was proof that we were Communists in the political sense.

But the most incriminating evidence Wittig found was in minutes of Brotherhood meetings (confiscated by the Gestapo on November 16) that pointed to our belief that "the State today again shows clearly its nature as the beast from the abyss" (Revelation of John, chapter 13).

We tried to clear up some misunderstandings, especially that of equating political and Christian communism. Then Wittig stated, "Gentlemen, what we know about you is sufficient to dissolve the Bruderhof. I cannot represent any extenuating circumstances. But the decision lies with the governor in Kassel." After further discussion in a similar vein, Wittig left the room for a few minutes, leaving the file

open on the table. We looked at it and saw a letter from the German Consulate in Winnipeg to the German Ministry of the Exterior, advising them that the Hutterian Brothers in North America were very much interested in the fate of their brothers in Germany.

When Wittig came back into the room, he told us that all further decisions about our fate were in the hands of the governor in Kassel and that he could not say any more.

We have looked for the minutes mentioned above in our archives but have been unable to find them, probably because the Gestapo kept them. But in order to give an idea of what they may have contained, I include a translation of parts of a meeting transcript of May 1933:

"**Eberhard Arnold:** Hitler has the idea that he can set up a real community. We must recognize that this is real idealism, devotion to a high goal. But the means are evil: suppression and enslavement. They are directed against everything that stands in the way, not even shrinking from murder. If we look deeper, we will recognize some traits of this even in the best forms of government.

"We have recognized the relative differences between different forms of government, but we have to recognize also that this brutal tyrant is the epitome of the power of the state. Yet even in the best, noblest, and purest form of government, the same nature of the beast of prey is revealed.

"We should not forget that in the Revelation of Jesus Christ, the Church that rules with wealth and force is called the whore, and the State the beast from the abyss. The alliance between the two is the Babylon that will be overthrown on the last Day, the Day of God's judgment. I believe that no form of government will be spared, neither the 'best' form nor the 'worst'."

From this and from the reaction of the Gestapo it is abundantly clear that the representatives of the Nazi government felt at least intuitively that the Bruderhof represented *without any ambiguity* a different order of society, which was in dangerous contrast to their State and ideology and therefore had to be dissolved.

—Hans Meier

Addendum

The following excerpt is from the diary of Michael Waldner, Bon Homme, South Dakota, 1937:

"From Frankfurt we went to Fulda, which has 30,000 inhabitants. There we met Hans Meier and Arnold. We went by car to the Rhön Bruderhof. It is mountainous country, the roads are bumpy. A quarter of a mile from the Hof our dear brothers and sisters met us in the dark (half past eight) with twelve lights and torches, singing beautiful songs, and we shook hands in great joy. We ate another meal with them.

"In the morning of April 10 we went round the Hof. It is a big well-built Hof. It is a shame to have to lose it and leave it. All cattle, pigs and horses are of the best. We went up the mountain. Here is the burial ground surrounded by a stone wall three feet wide and four feet high. Eberhard [Arnold]. Else [von Hollander] and three children lie buried there and rest. There we stood in awe, thinking how their faithful service follows after them. They collected many beautiful songs and writings."

Recent Publications

Stutzman, Mrs. W. Henry. *Genealogy of Isaac Plank, 1805-1979*. Pp. 732 ± index. \$10.00 ± \$1.50 postage. Order from author, R. 2, Box 98, Arthur, IL 61911.

Heeter, Ken J. *The Descendants of Benedict Miller 1828-1906 and Rachel Mast 1827-1906*. Pp. 226. Order from author, 711 Beretta Way, Bel Air, MD 21014.

Wade, Mary Helen (Mrs. Paul E.). *Descendants of Esrom Mayer Wade and Amelia D. Detweiler*. Pp. 8. Available from compiler, R 1, 21604 Freeport Road, Sterling, IL 61081.

Raber, Jerome and Stoll, Joseph. *The Wagler Family History: The Descendants of John S. Wagler and Magdalena Christner*. Pp. 576. \$11.00. Order from Raber's Variety, Route 1, Box 143, Montgomery, IN 47558.

Klippenstein, B.D. *Genealogy of Heinrich Klippenstein, 1849-1977*. Pp. 78. \$10.00 postpaid. Order from the author, 9/ Hart, Winnipeg, Manitoba, RCP 0M4.

Miller, D. Paul. *The Illinois Amish [Directory]*. First edition, 1980. Pp. 168 \pm index. Order from Pequea Publishers, 3981 E. Newsport Rd., Gordonville, PA 17529.

Descendants and History of Georg Petersheim Family, compiled by Petersheim descendants. First edition, 1979. Pp. 530 \pm index. Order from Pequea Publishers, 3981 E. Newsport Rd., Gordonville, PA 17529

Yoder, Rose L. *The Ancestors and Descendants of Abraham and Elizabeth Wagoner (1735-1979)*. [1979.] Pp. 80. \$5.80 postpaid. Order from Rose L. Yoder, 919 Greene Rd., Goshen, IN 46526

Swartz, Ernest F., et al. *Family Record of John S. Swartz and his Wife Anna Coffman Swartz*. [1980.] Pp. 69. Order from Ernest Swartz, Rt. 2, Box 385, Sarasota, FL 33581.

The U.S. Election of 1900: Noncombatants as Voters

"By request of a number of Amish people of Lagrange County, Indiana, we publish the following clipping from the *Lagrange Democrat*: 'There are in LaGrange County many Amish, Dunkards, and Mennonites, and a few Quakers. These people are certainly entitled to their religious belief whatever it may be. They are noncombatants and because there are such Governor Roosevelt questions their right to live in a free community. The governor's failure to make some satisfactory explanation of his cruel utterance confirms the belief that he meant just what he said. When he spoke at South Bend early in September he made no reference to the matter. He has not written a line concerning it. And yet the Republican speakers will travel through LaGrange County and ask the Amish, Dunkards, Mennonites and Quakers to vote for Roosevelt. Many of the people are not in the habit of voting at elections. But this year they have a personal interest at stake. Their honor has been attacked by a man who wants to be elected vice president of the United States and it is the duty of every Amishman, Mennonite, Dunkard and Quaker in the

country to cast his vote against this individual. Roosevelt delights to tell over his own signature in magazine articles how he shot a fleeing Spaniard in the back and simply because the Amish, Mennonites, Dunkards and Quakers do not approve of such cowardice he tries to besmirch their citizenship. Is such a man fit to be vice president? Is it not to be expected that on November sixth every non-combatant will vote against him?'"

—from the *Budget*, Nov. 1, 1900

A Word to the Wise

Persons who receive computerized letters inviting them to order their family "heritage" directory will do well to consider carefully whether or not a mere list of names and addresses of persons with the same surname is worth the roughly \$20.00 the book will cost them. It seems an enterprising person has collected telephone books from communities throughout the United States and entered names and addresses from them into a computer data base. Using the computer to address promotional letters, she offers limited edition family directories to persons with the same surname. The directory is simply the computer-produced list of persons with a common surname and their addresses arranged by state with no effort to show kinship between individuals in the group. Accompanying the list are several general chapters on genealogical research, origins of names and heraldry that have no direct relation to the family in question.

Nelson P. Springer, Curator
Mennonite Historical Library
Goshen College, Goshen, Ind.

Book Reviews

Full Circle. Edited by Mary Lou Cummings. Newton, Ks.: Faith and Life Press, 1978. Pp. 204. \$5.25.

Finally, Mennonite women are beginning to get their due. Belatedly, to be sure, for the Apostle Paul had declared already in his letter to the Romans that everyone is to be given what one owes them, "if respect, then respect; if honor, then

honor" (Rom. 13:7b, NIV). It is no surprise, however, that the women's liberation movement has not prompted publications such as this since that movement does not represent the prevailing spirit among the Mennonites. We are a conservative tradition, not prone to jump quickly on to every bandwagon.

There has been recognition given to Mennonite women's contributions all along in such areas as Aunt Lina's responses to children's letters in the former *Words of Cheer*, or in the writing of curriculum materials, or in articles and poetry in the *Gospel Herald*, but these did not begin to adequately represent the richness and diversity of gifts among them. Lois Gunden Clemens' Conrad Grebel lectures and their publication as *Woman Liberated* and now this title, not to mention others that have since appeared plus others projected, now begin to represent and champion this wider scope. Even non-Mennonite authors have given Mennonite women recognition, namely, Roland Bainton's *Women of the Reformation*. Yet Herta Funk's point in the foreword of this book stands with its own integrity when she raises the question, expecting a negative answer: "For what has history said so far about...Mennonite women?"

Full Circle deals with the underside of Mennonite history, Funk says, for "Mennonite women's stories...have been forgotten, neglected, not passed on." And in saying this she knowingly criticizes the title. But this criticism is also a commendation for it acknowledges that the belated task has begun to be accomplished and that the circle will be full if it is carried on in the future. There have been others with this vision in the past—remember van Braght's inclusion of the stories in *Martyrs Mirror* that Bainton highlights—but it has become submerged again. I trust this "cover-up will not repeat itself.

Nineteen stories have been included here combining the harvest reaped as a result of an Anabaptist Women's History contest (launched in 1975 in observance of the International Women's Year) as well as other stories that were discovered later. In response to that

initial contest announcement came some 30 entries, half of which received modest prizes.

Here one finds little self-consciousness. Here is not so much a crusader's strident spirit as a deep desire to "know what God wanted me to do" as Dr. Ella Bauman put it. These women were limited by their gender but they did not choose to focus upon it or quarrel about their treatment. An amazing span of diversity emerges here—from the sophisticated suffragette pastor in Brooklyn to the simple endurance and faith of a dust bowl prairie survivor.

The editor, Mary Lou Cummings, has highlighted this diversity when she looks at a young Maria Miller talking to God while she plows, and later at this same plowmaid serving amid China's internal uprisings; not to mention a dignified Brahmin Christian woman sharing God's work with Martha Burkhalter and her somewhat "unsaintly" eccentricities. Some are single, strong, and beautiful, while others are plain, married, and sickly with every intermixture of these traits. It is evident that all through the centuries and regardless of men's chauvinism, when God needed a person to accomplish His purposes and receive His honor, women were catapulted into prominence often enough to not allow men to forget their presence and power. It is well that Elise Boulding has reminded her readers of this fact with her publication in 1976 of *The Underside of History*.

These stories are told "warts n' all." Even the Mennonite Church has to take its lumps when, in the story of ordained minister Ann Allebach, the author says: "she turned down several calls to the pastorate, but we have no record that any of them came from her own people" though she retained her Mennonite Church membership all her life! If there was any touch of prejudice in Christian Krehbiel's comment to his new wife on their wedding day—"You must not expect me to devote myself to you alone today. I belong to the guests as well"—he was to discover that she belonged to them too! Sometimes, the reader is not sure whether it is the wife or the husband that is being recognized, but when

the battle for equal rights is over and the dust has settled, that may be an eloquent testimony of Christian unity in marriage.

Of the nineteen women whose stories are told here, nine were still living at the time *Full Circle* was published. The birth of the earliest woman included was 1810. Therefore we have a sampling, albeit limited, of the contributions and personalities of Mennonite women around the world in cameo for the present plus the past century.

This is good reading and it must not for a moment be considered a "woman's book." They have known this book's message all along. It is now time the rest of us acknowledge it also.

—Gerald C. Studer

Erb, Peter C., *Schwenckfeld in His Reformation Setting*. Valley Forge, Pennsylvania: Judson Press, 1978. Pp. 110. Paperbound. \$4.00 (plus \$1.00 for mail orders.)

I had the privilege of hearing one of the five lectures published here in book form. They were given with the purpose of acquainting the general public and the members of the Schwenckfelder Church with the holdings and activities of the Schwenckfelder Library at Pennsburg, Pennsylvania. Separate book displays are included here in full-page illustrations with interpretive captions.

The five chapters cover the major facets of the Reformation, with a concluding chapter focusing upon Caspar Schwenckfeld. Each chapter title capsulizes a major theme of that segment—"Faith of our Fathers; the Roman Catholic Background;" "The Wrath of God: Luther's Attempts at Self-Justification;" "The Sword of the Lord: Religious Upheaval and Social Revolution;" "Plowshares and Pruning Hooks: Anabaptist Concern with New Testament Ethics;" and finally, "The Beginning and the End: Caspar Schwenckfeld on the Person of Christ."

I found the delineations clear and stimulating—a kind of condensed refresher course in Reformation theology. Indeed, this book has been proposed for catechetical use. Each chapter is done with a commendable degree of objectivity, though there is enough flavor

added of the author's personal position to give the reader a sense of being among friends in every case. One gets the impression, too seldom acknowledged and perhaps disconcertingly so, that in terms of some of the crucial intricacies of theological understanding, Anabaptists have more in common with Roman Catholicism than with Protestantism. Erb begins by noting that Schwenckfeld for the first twenty-eight years of his life grew intellectually and spiritually within the embrace of the Roman Church. He points out that this is customarily either avoided or viewed in a totally negative fashion by Protestant historians. Such an interpretation is more an attack than an interpretation of events. He pleads: "Whatever decisions one makes regarding Catholic teaching, the fact that this tradition preserved Christianity in the Western world for twelve hundred years against overwhelming odds must be placed first among all final conclusions."

Perhaps it is understandable that Erb's own Mennonite background seems to receive the harshest treatment. We tend to be hardest on what we know best. He speaks of Menno's "dubious heritage," or says that "the Anabaptist Christ is sometimes left behind in the attempt to follow Him." But in light of Menno's preoccupation with celestial flesh, the use of the ban and shunning, and the consequent legalism that emerged at times, it is difficult to be entirely at ease with Menno. But then Anabaptism is a "many splendored thing" and there is a temptation to either select the best or rail at the worst.

This book's great strength is found in the perceptive thumb-nail sketch of the several Reformation theologies with their similarities and divergences. To have more than a superficial understanding of this pregnant era, one must have some appreciation of the history of ideas; and it is these rather than the fascinating and more-or-less isolated events that Erb brings into focus.

This book has twenty-three illustrations, modest footnotes, a rather extensive bibliography, and an index to enhance its usefulness.

—Gerald C. Studer

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Mennoniting Their Way in Woodford County Tramps, Hoboes, Peddlers

Tilman R. Smith

The earliest Mennonite settlers in Illinois were the Amish Mennonites who organized the Partridge Congregation west of Metamora in 1833. This was the first such congregation west of Ohio, the first German speaking congregation in Illinois and the second of any denomination in Woodford County. The Disciples of Christ had organized near Eureka the year previous.¹ Other Amish Mennonite settlements in Illinois soon followed.

I was born near Eureka, Illinois, January 1, 1903. My maternal great grandparents were charter members of the Partridge Congregation. I was a resident of Woodford County until 1959 with the exception of the years 1920-26. My roots in that area are deep; nearly all my early memories center there. My wife's forefathers were also Woodford County pioneers. Not many visitors came to our doors in the horse and buggy days, my early years, beyond relatives and neighbors. The itinerants who stopped impressed me greatly because seemingly they were different and interesting, and they struck some fear into our hearts. We had heard rumors, not from our parents, that these strangers—particularly gypsies—sometimes grabbed little boys and girls, stuck them into sacks and their mammas and papas never saw them again!

Our pioneer forefathers placed great emphasis on hospitality to all, including wayfarers and strangers. This attitude continued and was very evident in my boyhood. It was probable that the Amish Mennonites carried their generous impulses beyond the usual pioneer civilities. Recently I reread the book, *Christian Reeser—the Story of a Centenarian* written in 1952 by

a granddaughter, Ethel Reeser Cosco. Her sources were primary: four living children of Christian Reeser's original thirteen. Christian Reeser came to Woodford County in 1857, settling eight miles southeast of Eureka near Congerville on the bluffs above the Mackinaw River. In 1858 he built a four-room log cabin, two rooms downstairs and two up. Later additions followed and finally he built a full-length porch along the front. He parti-

tioned off one end of the porch as a room for tramps. He later said: "My conscience never allowed me to slumber soundly in my own bed while a stranger within our gates was sleeping on straw."²

This mention of the "tramp room" called to mind remembrances of tramps and peddlers who frequented our home, and the homes of our Mennonite neighbors and other church friends—neighbors who not only fed itinerants,

BUGHOUSE FABLES

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Ed Smith's humorous allusion to tramps, which appeared fifty-three years ago in the Chicago Herald and Examiner, a Hurst daily. Ed (a first cousin to Tilman R. Smith) and his wife, Frances, are Mennonites who reside in Eureka, Illinois.

but also provided lodging for them within their own homes.

The Tramp Room

From my readings, observations and inquiries of persons in different geographic areas of Canada and the United States, I have found that nearly all Amish and Mennonite communities were visited by tramps who called at their back doors for food and who sometimes asked to sleep in the barn or some other building outside the house. It was common practice to give these tramps food which they ate generally on the doorsteps. However, many persons are astounded to know that some of these vagrants ate at our Woodford Mennonite tables with the family and were provided beds in the family dwelling on a more or less regular basis.

Most of the homes I have identified as having tramp rooms were Mennonite. Some Apostolic Christian homes, then called "New Amish," also had tramp rooms. It is likely that members of other denominations in Woodford County kept itinerants in their homes overnight but of this I have no record.

Typically the Mennonite response to visits of tramps is well stated by Lee Griffith in "Grandma and the Hoboes": "An occasional traveler with a bag over his shoulder would come in from the road and knock on the door. Grandma [who was Emma Mae Eshleman of Lancaster County, Pennsylvania] would invite him to sit down on the steps while she went inside to prepare a meal. She would bring the food out and serve it to the traveler as he sat outside.

"I once asked Grandma why she never invited hoboes to sit at the dining table inside the house. She only replied, 'It wouldn't look right.' For a woman to invite strange men inside the house would have been a profound violation of Bible Belt codes. . . .

"... 'Emma,' a neighbor woman would tell her, 'these bums will

take advantage of you.' And then the neighbor woman would explain how hoboes left secret carvings on telephone poles and tree trunks to notify future travelers of houses where free meals were available. 'Emma, I wouldn't be surprised if they had already marked some of the telephone poles by your house.'"³ (There were, to be sure, definite markings used on homes, as can be seen below.) An exception to the above pattern, and more like the Woodford County Mennonite model, was in Holmes County, Ohio.

The Amish and Mennonites of Holmes County, Ohio, had some of the same motivation and the same practices as the Woodford County Amish Mennonites. Sarah Weaver states: "The tramps were often met with much kindness and many people considered the great blessings that came from taking in the stranger. . . . Some people had a room in their home especially for the tramp guests. . . . In some homes where the family was large, and the house rather small, the men slept in the barn, but first they were induced to hand over their matches before they were accepted for the night. Then they were given blankets and shown a suitable place to sleep."⁴ Of course sometimes tramps were told to move on because they came too often!

Motivation

Settlers in the Illinois Wild West were not much concerned as to what the neighbors might think about inviting wayfarers into their homes, the concern of Grandma Eshleman. However, they would have agreed with Grandma Eshleman's motivation: "Grandma gave food to the hoboes because 'that's what Jesus wants.' That simple. No complications. No theologizing. No concerns over works-righteousness versus justification-by-faith-alone."⁵

Our forefathers were godly persons who took biblical proclamations seriously: "Let brotherly love continue. Be not forgetful to enter-

tain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares" (Heb. 13:1,2 KJV); "For I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in" (Mat. 25:35 KJV); and "He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth unto the Lord" (Prov. 19:17 KJV). Indeed, these scriptures were taken seriously, and literally.

It was considered a mark of character not to turn anyone away who was in need. Recently I talked to a 1980 graduate of Goshen (Indiana) Biblical Seminary. She stated that she inquired about the heritage of her father, whose mother died when he was six. She asked her father what he could best remember. He finally remarked: "I guess it is that she never turned anyone away." The daughter quizzed further and asked which of his sisters was most like his mother. He finally named a sister, and gave the same reason: "She never turned anyone away." The broad implication of this answer might be that if people were considerate and kind to the stranger they would most certainly be thoughtful and kind to family and friends.

Another woman stated that while serving itinerants, she was very conscious about the fact "that these wayfarers may be children of friends and acquaintances or even our own distant relatives." When I recall the names of Dan Augsburg, Joe Birkey, Bill Schuck and Old Ulrich as being in this category, she may have been right.

Motivation for housing strangers must also have transcended such religious reasoning. Early settlers had few close neighbors. They themselves had been pilgrims and strangers and they knew the blessings of hospitality and also the pangs of loneliness.

Itinerant Types

It is important to understand the "pecking order" of that great body

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of homeless and transient professionals who crossed the United States from north to south and east to west (hoboes), and others in their smaller orbits (tramps), literally totaling several million persons at given times. The word "tramp" is often used as a blanket term applied to all classes of homeless, vagrant, or transitory types. Sometimes "hobo" is used in the same sense. Nels Anderson, for nearly ten years from age fifteen an authentic hobo, and later a college professor, has stated that distinctions should be made but we should not draw the line too closely. He lists five types of homeless persons:

1. The seasonal migratory worker; the upper class of hobo. A few women were included in this class. While there were a few female transients and even a married couple now and then, Anderson states: "Tramping is a man's game. Few women are ever found on the road. The inconvenience and hazards of tramping prevent it."⁶

2. The transient or occasional worker or hobo.

3. The tramp who "dreams and wanders," and works only when convenient—which is seldom. In general, it is against the tramp's

principles to be caught working; infrequently for short periods he might eschew his principles and work.

4. The bum who seldom travels and seldom works. Generally he stays at one place.

5. The home guard—persons who live in the "jungles" of the city, "Hobohemia," seldom leave the place and they beg in the city.⁷

Anderson says that the name hobo originated from the words "hoe boy," a term plainly derived from work on the farm. Workers of the hobo type generally picked berries, fruit, hops, and helped harvest the crops on western farms. They followed the seasons around, giving their time to farms in spring, summer and autumn, and ending up in the ice fields or forests in winter.

The tramp is the type of itinerant who generally stopped at Mennonite homes. He was usually thought of as an able-bodied individual who had a romantic passion to see the country and gain new experience without having to work. He was a specialist in getting by. Typically, he was neither a drunkard nor a bum, but an easygoing individual who lived from hand to mouth for the mere joy of living. Anderson states: "While I was

never given to spending money on drink, I did find myself penniless a number of times. I used these occasions for getting another kind of hobo experience, begging from passersby on streets ("pan-handling"), or begging at back doors for food."⁸

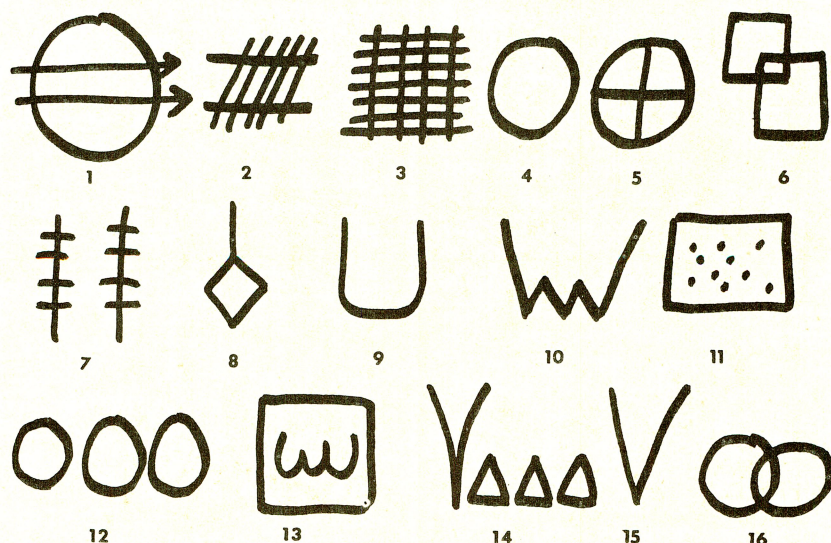
The hobo generally followed the railroads. Its great network of rails took him all over Canada and the United States. Clark C. Spence states: "Hoboes could ride in any number of places on a train and all of them were dangerous. Always at war with the railroad 'bull'—the hobo also faced mutilation and death every time he jumped a freight. Some of these hardy wanderers cling to the outer frame of a truck, ride between the boxcars and hang on to the rods (underneath the car); a moment's inattention and they'll be thrown beneath the wheels."⁹ Many rode inside the boxcars and many on top. Some rode in coal cars, and some hid among the livestock, chiefly sheep.

In 1908, Edmund Kelly described the North American world of the tramp as follows: "an army of 500,000 tramps of which a large percentage are boys from sixteen to twenty-one years of age, all of them tending to graduate from vagrancy to crime."¹⁰ He also documented the dangers of riding the railroads. Between 1901 and 1905, from among those riding the railroads, 23,964 trespassers were killed and 25,236 injured, most of them, tramps. The author was convinced that probably not over half of the deaths were reported.¹¹ Kelly's book was totally unfavorable to hoboes and tramps and probably his definition of train riders would indicate that they were hoboes rather than tramps.

Why Did Persons Take to the Road?

Anderson lists the following reasons for itinerancy:

1. Seasonal work and frequent unemployment.
2. Industrial inadequacy—poor working conditions which led to accidents, poisons, and other poor health conditions.
3. Defects of personality.
4. Crises in the lives of persons.
5. Racial or national (ethnic) discrimination, not only against



THESE SYMBOLS, CHALKED on fences, poles, water tanks and the like, told hoboes much about the town. 1 — Circle with two arrows meant two hoboes left together, traveling in the direction of the arrows. 2 — Hoboes not welcome; could be put to work on the rockpile. 3 — Just what it looks like: jail bars. 4 — "Out" or "get out," poor pickings for hoboes. 5 — Town no good, but Christian missions may help. 6 — Good place to make connections with other hoboes. 7 — Ministers and heads of missions will help migrants. 8 —

Pendulum — town is sometimes friendly, sometimes not. 9 — Rail terminal or division point; good place to board trains in several directions. 10 — "Teeth" — police and town very hostile to hoboes. 11 — "Calaboose" (jail) is crawling with lice. 12 — Three O's, the town is triply no-good, keep moving. 13 — Big-hearted town, friendly to hoboes. 14 — Food to be had for the asking; most everybody friendly. 15 — OK — townspeople are generally friendly to hoboes. 16 — Town isn't much good for lone hobo; best results in pairs.

- Blacks and Mexicans, but against new white immigrant groups.
6. Wanderlust.
 8. Crimes and misdemeanors—many left the home community to escape identification.
 9. Some were too old or disabled to work, yet too independent to go to the alms house (poor farms).¹²
 - 10 To this list family problems should be added. Divorces were uncommon and frowned upon by society in general. Many a man took to the road never to return when family stress seemingly became unmanageable. Boys fourteen or fifteen often left home when problems arose.

The Regulars Among Woodford County Tramps: Patrons of Privilege.

"Character Sketches"

Following is a list of tramps, in most cases persons I can personally remember, who ate at our table and stayed in our tramp rooms overnight. These persons I have verified by my contemporaries who added a few names of those whom I did not remember or had never known. I cannot attest to the historical accuracy of every individual detail but these persons were real people and in general the characterizations are reasonable facsimiles of what happened.

There were dozens of others who knocked at our back doors and responded to the housewife: "Lady, could you give me a cup of coffee and a sandwich?" They probably were never seen again. These persons were likely hoboes who came off the railroad tracks as they walked to other railroads—for example, from Eureka to Roanoke, or Washington to Metamora—which allowed them to take off for some destination they may have had in mind—or simply to take off!

Most of these tramps who stayed in our homes were pilgrims in a sense, but hardly strangers. Through many contacts, we also suspected that we were not entertaining angels unawares.

1. "Old Ulrich." During the winter Old Ulrich stayed at the Woodford County Poor Farm. However, in the summer he liked to travel

around. He had a decidedly round face, and a white beard closely cropped without a mustache. He used to stop at our home and that of many of the neighbors. He was originally from Germany. An older resident remembers that her mother liked to have him come to her home and visit as they conversed in German. On one occasion Old Ulrich gave the mother a plate from Germany which remains with a granddaughter today. Old Ulrich had a peculiar eating habit: he liked to dip his pie in lettuce gravy.

2. Dan Augsburg. He was a slightly built, short, older man, with a white mustache and tender pleading eyes which made it difficult to deny him food or shelter. He liked hot tea and before meals would give a general hint to the housewife by asking one of the children: "Is your mother going to have tea this evening?"

3. "Red Beard," or "Deutschie Soup." He would put all his vittles together and pour coffee over the mixture before eating. He frequently stopped at our home. His eating habits left an indelible imprint on a small boy's mind.

4. Jim and John Foley. These were Irish brothers who traveled and sought hospitality as a pair. Although unknown to me, these men often stayed at the George I. Sommer home at Metamora.

5. Bummel Fritz, undoubtedly a nickname. He frequently stayed at the homes of Chris and Joe Wagner. He sputtered his words and was apt to salivate upon you if you were too close. He fascinated the boys, particularly, by his stories. These would be repeated, generally to other boys at church. One story which made its rounds was that Bummel Fritz was very quick in his youth and could run very fast. He stated that once a woman scared him so badly and he ran so fast that you could have flipped pennies on his coattail. (This may not seem very funny now but it was hilarious to pre-teen boys at that time!)

6. Joe Birkey. He never came to our home. However, he did stop at my Uncle Chris Smith's home and others in the community. Joe Birkey was lame. Children at that time as now were quite insensitive to physical and mental disabilities and made fun of Lame Joe Birkey

with this rhythmic jive: "Lame Joe Birkey is a game old turkey."

7. John More—"Bismark." John More "Bismark," "Deutschie Soup," and "Red Beard" may have been the same person. In a July 1980 communication from George Ackerman of Morton, Illinois, he spoke about a certain John More who used to come to their place and his eating pattern seemed to be much the same as was indicated previously about Deutschie Soup. Ackerman wrote: "John More was one of the dirtiest tramps that came to our house. He was fond of pancakes and cottage cheese. When he came for breakfast we sometimes gave him this type of breakfast with coffee. He would take his coffee, pour it over his food and eat it. We also called this tramp 'Bismark.'"

John More (or Bismark) must have been something of a roving psychologist. Ackerman stated: "If he didn't get what he wanted to eat he would quote scripture and tell you how to treat people less fortunate than you, if you wished to be a good Christian."¹³

Two Special Case Studies

1. *Jim Day.* Jim Day was a regular guest in many Mennonite homes in Woodford County for a period of more than twenty-five years. His antics, his arrogance and his prejudices were something to behold. Supposedly he was a onetime school teacher who was disappointed in love and took to the road. He was an avid reader and was reported to have known Latin. He frequently studied the dictionary, and stored books at different homes where he stayed. One person interviewed said that she was always glad when he came to their home because he helped her with her arithmetic. Jim Day would forsake his "professional ethics" as a tramp at certain times, about once a year, to work in the harvest fields. For a number of years he helped my father with cutting and shocking oats. One of his idiosyncrasies was to drink, even on the hottest days, his steaming hot coffee mid-morning and mid-afternoon. He had a tremendous aversion to anyone who whistled. On one occasion my father delivered water to him and was whistling. Jim became very angry and said:

"Did you learn that in Sunday school yesterday, John?" My father did not know at first what he meant, until Jim proceeded to point this out in plain terms. Jim was a frequent visitor at the George Sommer family home near Metamora where he without hesitation would ask them to turn off the radio (yes, we had radios in the twenties) when he wanted to sleep.

Uncle Ben and Aunt Emma Schertz lived across the road from our home. Jim Day was a regular patron in their home for meals and overnight. On one occasion I remember hearing him order his breakfast: "Emma, I want two soft-boiled eggs, three strips of bacon, toast and coffee—hot coffee." And he got what he wanted. The Schertzs had two nephews staying at their home who would torment Jim in one way or another. On one occasion Kim became very angry and reported to Uncle Ben—"Ben, if you don't take care of these boys, I will." This was the only time I remember Uncle Ben raising his voice. He responded, "Mr. Day, I am running this house." Jim Day covered the circuit from Morton through Woodford County to Flanagan regularly for a period of twenty-five years until he died and was buried at the Woodford County Poor Farm, Metamora, in the early 1930's.

It must have taken an ample portion of Christian grace for the hosts to accept the arrogance and impertinence of Jim Day who seemed to feel that his presence in itself was a blessing and sufficient remuneration indeed!

2. *William Schuck*. William Schuck was also known earlier as "Black Bear" and later as "Old Bear." In one locality he took the name of Belsley until identified by someone who knew him.

From my earliest memories he came to our farm home. As a young man he had very black whiskers and a very crooked nose which reputedly had been broken in a fight. For more than thirty years Bill Schuck traveled by foot from Morton and Washington—just outside Woodford County to the south, to Metamora, Eureka, Roanoke, Minonk, and Flanagan—a Mennonite community just outside of Woodford County to the east. He

would return in about two weeks by a slightly different route to Morton where he stayed with the Ackerman family. George Ackerman, now eighty-two states: "Bill Schuck in summer preferred to sleep in the barn driveway on the hay. In bad weather he slept on a cot in the furnace room. Before going to sleep he pulled a half-pint of whiskey from his hip pocket saying, 'This is what I use to give me rest if I have difficulty in going to sleep.'"¹⁴

Bill Schuck was not necessarily an unwanted guest. One person said recently, "Oh, I remember him. I sort of looked forward to his coming because he was such an interesting person."

Old Bear was welcomed also because "he would come to our place sometimes with greetings from folks in the Roanoke and Eureka area. We knew that he sometimes delivered greetings from us to people along his route, for people sometimes told us about this."

Bill Schuck was still following his old beat as late as 1935. In that year he stopped at our home in Roanoke. He asked for money. I told him I would not give him money but would give him a meal which he said he did not want. He inquired why I would not give money and I stated that I suspected he would go to the tavern and buy liquor. His reply was: "Oh, you know, me, do you?" Yes, I had known Bill Schuck for thirty years.

Why did Bill Schuck take to the road? No one really knows. George Ackerman says: "I knew that if he had wanted to, he could have slept in a good bed at some relative's place, but he preferred the road. His reason was, 'I am a bum and they are Christians. It's no place for me.'"

One rumor has it that at one time in his earlier years he was "shunned" by church and family. This cannot be verified, but his image of himself and his concept of Christians indicate a very deep wound sometime in his life.

Peddlers

In addition to tramps and hoboes, peddlers stopped regularly at our homes for food and lodging, not only for themselves but for their horses. These men sold wares

which they transported with horse and wagon. Some sold sundry items while others specialized in one or two lines. Here are some examples:

1. *Abe O'Larnick*. Abe had special homes where he would expect to spend the night or weekend. He peddled only brooms and brushes over well calculated and carefully defined routes. He stopped at our home from my earliest remembrances and was still in circulation in 1928. One of his regular stops was at the Peter B. Schrock home near Lowpoint, Illinois, every two weeks, nearly always on a Saturday night. He would arrive at the farm, put his horse in the barn and feed it, and then come to the house before the evening meal which he ate with the family. He slept in a small room set aside for itinerants, ate five meals and then left on Monday morning. He did not need an invitation and I am sure that the thought never entered his mind that his expectations may have been a bit unusual. I cannot recall that he ever gave his hosts even a broom or a brush. (I stayed in the Peter B. Schrock home for three years as a high school teacher. Although I myself was not completely a charity case, I, too, probably came close to being one!)

2. *Mr. Zakin*. Mr. Zakin regularly stopped at our home, sometimes overnight. Zakin was Jewish and ate only kosher foods. At our home he would ask which food was kosher, but at the George I. Sommer home near Metamora when food was passed he would look at Mrs. Sommer and she would nod "yes" or "no" as to whether the food was kosher. After supper he would spread out his sundries before my parents and three goggle-eyed boys: pocketknives, combs, brushes, candy, mouth harps, needles, pins, shoestrings, trinkets that sparkled, imported lace, yard goods, etc.

3. *Charles "Chollie" Ollie*. Chollie carried the same lines as Zakin but never stopped at our home. His "beat" was a few miles north. He ate and slept at the home of my uncle J.D. Smith near Metamora and at the William Beer home near Roanoke.

Were the Sommer's, Schertz's, Buzzard's, Harnish's, Gingerich's, Oyer's, Wagner's, Smith's, Im-

hoff's, Ackerman's, Beer's, and other families "taken in" by these freeloaders? They probably were, but if so, it was with their eyes and hearts open!

Number of Tramps and Hoboes

In 1908 Edmund Kelly estimated the number of tramps and hoboes in the United States at 500,000. In 1933 Samuel Wallace quoted Anderson in testimony before the U.S. Senate as saying there were no less than a million and a half transients and homeless persons, and stressed that this was a conservative estimate.¹⁵ Other estimates varied between two and four million. According to Clark C. Spence, the numbers fluctuated with the national economy: "That the ranks of tramps and hoboes expanded and contracted with the rise and fall of the national economy is self-evident. The depressions of 1873, 1893, and 1929 cast thousands, even millions, adrift, many of them riding the boxcars from noplac in particular to nowhere at all."¹⁶

The End of an Era

With the coming of Social Security in 1935 and other social services which followed, tramps and hoboes in the then established sense, ceased to exist. Those defined as beggars or panhandlers are still with us, especially in the cities. We now satisfy our wanderlust through conducted tours, bicycle trips, backpacking, camping, and "roughing it" with homes on wheels. Today, those with wanderlust in their hearts do not have to depend upon markings on gateposts or telephone poles. There is a current published directory for "Mennoniting Your Way," a firm invitation to eat and sleep in transit, in the homes of like-minded "Anabaptists"!

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1 C. Henry Smith, "One Hundred Years Ago." Home-coming Address of Partridge (now Metamora) Congregation, August 1940.

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3 Lee Griffith, "Grandma and the Hoboes," *Christian Living* (July 1980), 23.

4 Sarah M. Weaver, "The Tramps of Holmes County," *Family Life*, 1 (January 1968), 14-15. Article supplied, courtesy of David Luthy, editor and writer at Pathway Publishers, Aylmer, Ontario, Canada.

5 Griffith, 23.

6 Nels Anderson, *The Hobo: The Sociology of the Homeless Man* (Phoenix Books, University of Chicago Press, 1965), 137.

7 Anderson, 89.

8 Anderson, ix.

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10 Kelly, *The Elimination of the Tramp*, 1908, 1-2.

11 Kelly, 2.

12 Anderson, 61-86.

13 Eliza Ackerman, "George's Memories of Tramps." Correspondence with Emma Sommer, July 11, 1980.

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16 Spence, 52.

Benjamin Frantz, M.D.

(Additional Note to the
Biographical Sketch by
J.C. Wenger

[see the April 1980 *MHB*])

Martin E. Ressler

I was just sitting here enjoying the article . . . on the life of Dr. Benjamin Frantz.

There is however, one statement there that raises a bit of a ques-

tion. At the beginning of the second column you state his great-grandfather was Michael Frantz (1687-1748) of near Basel in Switzerland, who came to Pennsylvania on the ship *Molly* in 1727, is said to have served as a Lancaster County Mennonite preacher, and was buried along the Cocalico Creek.

All other writings here in the east that record the life and works of Michael Frantz list him as becoming a member of the German Baptist Church (now Church of the Brethren) in which he became a prominent leader and the main character for the German Baptists in the division of that group and Conrad Beissel, founder of the Ephrata Cloister.

In the book, *A History of the Brethren*, by Martin Grove Brumbaugh, 1899, p. 300, you will note the following under the heading Michael Frantz: "He was born in the Canton of St. Jacob, near Basle, Switzerland, in the year 1687, came to America in September 1727, and settled in the vicinity of the Cocalico, in Lancaster County, Pa., where he soon became convinced of the truth of the doctrines as they are held forth by the Brethren. Consequently he was received into the fellowship of the 'little flock' which had been separated from the parent church of Ephrata, on account of the innovations that were being introduced by the mystic Conrad Beissel. He was baptized by Peter Becker on September 29, 1734, the same day that Conestoga was organized into a separate church; and while it was otherwise unsupplied, this Brother Frantz was commissioned to serve them in the capacity of an exhorter, in which he approved himself so well that he was soon ordained by the imposition of hands to be elder, and the next year (1735), he took upon him the entire care of the church, which he served with exemplary zeal and fidelity until the day of his death, December 1747. One record says 1748. His remains are buried in the old graveyard near the Cocalico." For further writings on his life, check *Schwarzenau* Volume II, No. 2, October 1940-January 1941, and *The Brethren in Colonial America*, Donald F. Durnbaugh, 1967, p. 180.

In the book, *History of the Church of the Brethren of the Eastern District of Pennsylvania*, by the Committee, Elder S.R. Zug, Chairman, 1915, opposite page 326, you will see the picture of the barn on the Michael Frantz property where the division was to have taken place between Michael Frantz and Conrad Beissel.

In 1946, my father bought this property from the Oil Co., and after his death in 1972 it became the property of my sister who is the present owner. I checked the old part of this barn inside and out for a possible erection date but none was ever found. This barn remains to be the oldest remaining landmark of the Church of the Brethren in North America.

It is possible that there could have been two men by the same name, born in the same community, and died the same year, but it is highly unlikely. I thought maybe you might want to check this statement of his Mennonite connection a bit more thoroughly.

Further Reflections on Dr. Frantz

I am especially interested in Dr. Frantz as I have just completed a genealogy of the Ryder family of which his wife Mary Ann Ryder, was a member. I saw the article very briefly at a friends, but I noticed that her ancestry included the statement that her ancestor Michael Ryder was lost during the Braddock campaign. That was the belief held by the family and included in the write-ups in the various county histories. However, my research in Lancaster County has provided proof that Michael died in Cocalico Township several years after Braddock's campaign, and it was apparently his son, Jacob, who died in that engagement. The family records all say the "Old Grandfather" was lost then, but I believe they never knew that Jacob existed. They always gave the line as Michael - Michael - Adam; whereas I have proof that it really was Michael - Jacob - Michael - Adam.

—Margaret B. DuVernet
(Hagerstown, Md.)

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Mattie Miller Swartz, comp., *Family Record of Daniel J. Miller and Barbara Bontrager Miller 1836 to 1979*. Pp. 199 ± index. \$3.50 ± postage. Order from John Miller, Jr., R. 2, Box 93, Topeka, IN 46571.

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God Moves through his People: 100 Years in the Life of a Congregation. History and Pictorial Directory of the North Main Street Mennonite Church, Nappanee, Indiana 1980. Pp. 80. \$6.50. Centennial Plate, \$4.75. Available from North Main Street Mennonite Church, 504 N. Main Street, Nappanee, IN 46550.

Wall, O.J., Comp. *A Concise Record of our Evangelical Mennonite Brethren Annual Conference Reports 1889-1979*. [1980]. Pp. 130. Available from O.J. Wall, Box 50, Frazer, MT 59225.

Schmucker, Barbara & Laverne, comps. *Reuben E. Bontrager and Elizabeth Yoder Genealogy 1852-1979*. Assisted by Lester F. Graber. 1980. Unpaged. \$3.75 plus .60 postage. Order from Laverne Schmuckers, Route 4, Searcy, AR 72143 or Lester Graber, Route 2, Box 60A, Beebe, AR 72143.

Swartzentruber, Nancy Jane. *To Lie Down in Peace* [Narrative of an Amish family]. 1980. Illus. Pp. 80. Order from author, Springs, PA 15562.

Book Reviews

Rebecca's Nancy. By Joan Reimer Goman. 1978. Pp. 50, unnumbered. \$7.95.

People Apart. Photography by David L. Hunsberger, James Hertel, and Koni Lattner; text by J. Winfield Fretz. 1978. Pp. 111. \$19.95.

Mennonite Country. Drawings by Peter Etril Snyder; text by A. K. Herrfort. 1978. Pp. 81, unnumbered. \$19.95.

St. Jacobs, Ont.: Sand Hills Press, Box 352, N0B 2N0.

It is not customary for this journal to review a book for children in its columns. In this instance we do so in order to acquaint our readers with a variety of quality books produced by this fledgling publisher. These volumes augur well for the excellent contribution which this small press can make to the wider public.

Rebecca's Nancy is a delightful story for children aged three to eight years concerning a little girl's anxiety over her lost favorite doll. Each step of the simple story is illustrated by cut-outs of crayon rubbings, the various textures of which Goman created from a variety of wood, textile, and other surfaces.

Author/artist Goman grew up in Waterloo County, Ontario, where she developed romantic impressions of the Old Order Mennonite people who live about her. She has visited these people in their homes and observed them in their schools. Go-

man is herself a kindergarten teacher in the Waterloo area.

It is a heart-warming story that any child with a special blanket, doll, or stuffed toy can readily identify with. The author reveals much of the daily routine of Old Order Mennonite life in the process of telling her story. While it seems like a chapter out of life a hundred years ago, it is a story that is set in the present time. It would be ideal for reading to pre-school children and will captivate elementary school-age children who will be able to read the story for themselves.

People Apart is aptly sub-titled "Portrait of a Mennonite World in Waterloo County, Ontario." To read it is to step into a world apart indeed: one that exists in the midst of the encroachments of technology. The text hints at centuries of history, customs, and beliefs and illustrates with sympathy and understanding the Mennonites' deep, peaceful sense of community. The pictures are almost etching-like and convey the gentle dignity of the Old Order Mennonite people. So pervasive a mood is hardly to be found anymore among the larger group of North American Mennonites.

The forward is by Paul Tiessen and the sparse text accompanying the beautiful black and white pictures conveys the feeling that the author and the professor were at your side gently but perceptively guiding your tour among these people of the Ontario countryside.

Each of the six chapters is introduced by a brief excerpt from Mabel Dunham's *The Trail of the Conestoga*. The pictures depict the gentility, the sense of humor, the simple orderliness, the rugged reverence and happy devotion of family, vocation, and religious conviction that sets these people apart. It is not unusual for persons studying these people and their lifestyle to come away convinced that they, not we, are the ones who should be regarded as the norm for wholesome living. Lest we rationalize too quickly, another commented that "they show us all that assimilation is not inevitable."

Mennonite Country is a rare combination of 36 full page pen-and-ink drawings and the homely wisdom of an Old Order Amish farmer and

folk-philosopher. Snyder's drawings have been made over many years of association with the Old Order world. Although his vision of these people seems romantic, he presents to our eyes an actual world which most of us have had little occasion to savor as we hasten by. The drawings included here have been created specifically for this book. The viewer will soon discover that Snyder's lines are thin and his drawings delicate with a predominant sense of light airiness.

The earthly musings of Herrfort are not to be regarded as commentary on the drawings but rather have been combined with these pictures to add the rarely-heard voice of one who represents the heart and mind of those depicted visually. We shall discover hints of the Pennsylvania-Dutch dialect and evidences of Herrfort's reading material which is the King James Bible, almanacs, and the *Martyrs Mirror*, not *Time* or *Fortune*. Yet one shall discover that he is quite aware of such massive modern realities as the United Nations and the diminishing oil reserves. Not surprisingly he champions the use of compost rather than chemical fertilizers and is not apologetic about his yields. He also has a good word to say for Beneficial Weeds and the capitalization is his. He sees a substantial woodlot on a farm as necessary as many farmers would consider an insurance policy. He recommends the dietary counsel of Daniel 1:12-15 as superior to the "king's best prepared meats and wines." He asserts that the "trend to bigger and fewer farms will in the end prove to be enormously harmful."

This large book of drawings balanced by the homely counsel of an elderly Amish farmer is also, like *People Apart*, the kind of book that invites the reader to while away an hour reflecting on simple pastoral pictures while listening to the wisdom and opinion of a man of fields and farm. Mingled through it all is his familiarity with the Bible and his commitment to the Christian faith and life. Both of these books are of the coffee-table variety but deserve far more than the casual and bemused attention of a sophisticated and harried society.

—Gerald C. Studer